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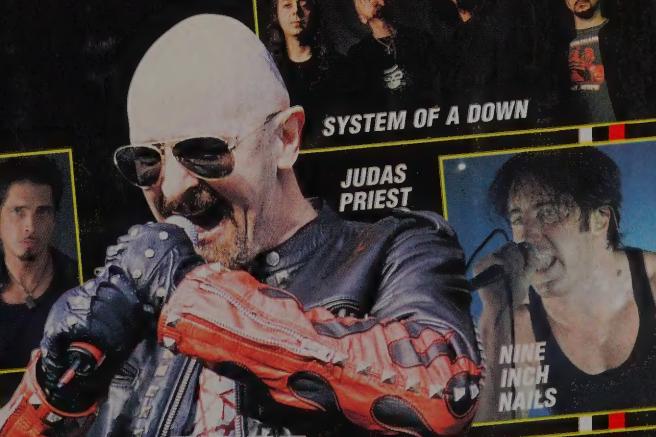
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EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER: Mitch Herskowitz

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Andy Secher

EDITOR: Amy Sciarretto

MANAGING EDITOR: Renee Daigle

COPY EDITOR: Charla Hudson

ART DIRECTOR: Frank Cafiero

PHOTO EDITOR: Debra Trebitz

CIRCULATION MARKETING DIRECTOR: Evan Honig

NEW JERSEY EDITORIAL OFFICE

210 Route 4 East, Suite 211
Paramus, NJ 07652 • (201) 843-4004

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Vinny Cecolini, Gail Flug, Jeff Kitts, Kevin Michaels, Pat Mitchell, Ilko Nechev, Patti Romanowski, Pamela Shaw, Michael Shore and Jodi Summers.

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Annmaria DiSanto, George DeSoto, Rick Gould, Ross Halfin, Glen LaFerman, Krasner/Trebitz, Liza Leeds, Eddie Malluk, Larry Marano, Jeffrey Mayer, Starfile, Chris Walter / Photofeatures, Mark Weiss, Frank White, and Neil Zlozower.

ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

NATIONAL ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Mitch Herskowitz
441 Lexington Ave., Suite 1203
New York, NY 10017 • (212) 490-1715

WEST COAST REPRESENTATIVE

Jeff Lubetkin Associates, P.O. Box 9252
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ADVERTISING MANAGER

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WE READ YOUR MAIL

KNOT ENOUGH

I love Slipknot. I love everything about them: the way they look, the way they sound, the way they act off-stage. Nobody has provided better coverage of Slipknot from the release of **Vol. 3** right up through the *Subliminal Verses Tour*, than **Hit Parader**. Please keep doing it. I'll buy every issue when I see those not-smiling faces staring menacingly at me.

Sir Sid
Lowell, MA

Did you ever hear the story about the guy who got stuck in an ice cream store overnight? He loved ice cream more than anything, and he felt like he had gone to heaven being alone with 48 flavors for 12 hours. But by morning, he had eaten so much ice cream that he didn't want to even see the stuff for the next six months. The morale of this tale? Well, that's kinda the way I feel about Slipknot after having you shove them down our throats month after month. Enough already. You're taking something I love and giving me too much of it.

Brenda
New Orleans, LA



Slipknot: Rewriting rock history.

When the great bands of metal history are listed, Slipknot must be at the very top of the list. They have single-handedly reinvented a format, shock rock, that many so-called "experts" felt was dead,

and they've done so with a never-ending source of imagination and insight.
Eric
Sayreville, NJ

continued on page 8



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WE READ YOUR MAIL

I may be raked over the coals for saying this, but I think Slipknot is nothing more than a metal flavor of the Month. I know they've been successful for a long time, but I do question their long-term impact upon metal history. Name me one song of theirs that might be played on "classic" rock radio a decade from now! Tell me one contribution they've made to metal culture—other than those often hideous masks. Before we deify Slipknot, perhaps we should examine their artistic impact a bit closer.

Sami
Eugene, OR

KINGS OVERSIGHT

What do you get when you place together all the great bands in metal history? You get *The Kings of Metal*, that's what! The issue was the best one you've ever done. I learned things I never knew about AC/DC, Motley Crue, Iron Maiden and Black Sabbath. And it was great to read another take on the success of Zeppelin, Aerosmith and Priest. Keep up the good work.

Jim
Houston, TX

I don't get it. **Hit Parader** presents an amazing *Kings of Metal* issue... and gives Slayer just one darn photo. What gives? If you don't realize this by now, I don't think my words are going to make much of a difference, but it's impossible to deny the degree of impact that Slayer has had upon the metal world over the last two decades. Are they as famous as Zeppelin or Sabbath? Probably not. Are they as significant?

Absolutely!
Karen
Dodge City, KA

Your *Kings of Metal* issue rocked! I like it when publications take their time and present longer, more detailed features on great bands like Iron Maiden and misunderstood artists like Axl Rose. Sometimes I feel that many publications (yours included) tend to rush the subject believing that your reader's attention span may only last for a few minutes. Believe me, when the stories are as informative and well-written as the ones in your "special" issue, maintaining reader interest will *never* be a problem.

Keith
Toronto, CANADA

Cristina Scabbia: She's HOT!

UPRISING EVALUATION

While I applaud **Hit Parader**'s efforts to publicize bands like Lacuna Coil, Hatebreed and Shadows Fall, I wonder if these acts truly deserve the kind of attention they've been generating. It seems to me that every few years the metal form needs to reinvent itself. Just a few years ago we were all subjected to the New Metal boom, where every band was part of this so-called "movement." Well, where are bands like Adema and Powerman 5000 today? I fear that by 2006 we'll be asking much the same question about many of today's "underground" sensations.

Rich
Ft. Madison, IA



That chick in Lacuna Coil is hot! Why can't you people print more photos of hot female rockers? I guess maybe it's because there aren't very many of them, but when you do find 'em, I'm sure that the male readership of this magazine would appreciate seeing them. Thank you in advance.

Kippi
Tucson, AZ

It's very amusing to me that Lamb of God is suddenly everyone's "darling." I've been following their career for more than a decade—ever since they were playing around the Virginia area as Burn the Priest. All I want to know is what took everyone so long to catch on? They were a great band then, and they're an even better band now.

Roy
Roanoke, VA

FATES WARNING



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"Awaken The Guardian still remains an all time classic in my book... I consider it to be up there along side of Metallica's "Master Of Puppets", Queensryche's "Operation: Mindcrime" and Slayer's "Reign In Blood" as one of the greatest metal releases on the 80's" - MIKE PORTNOY/Dream Theater

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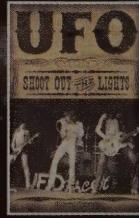
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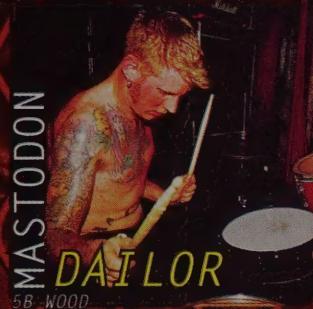
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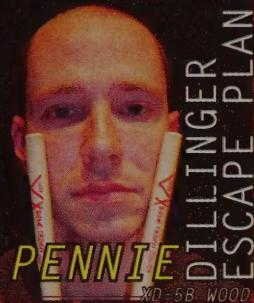
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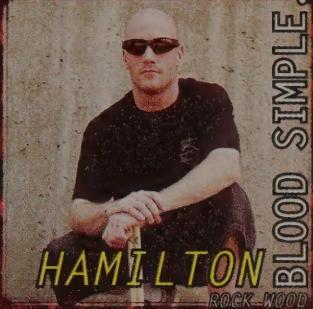
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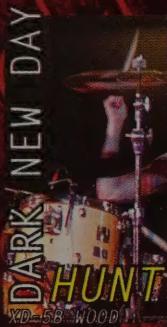


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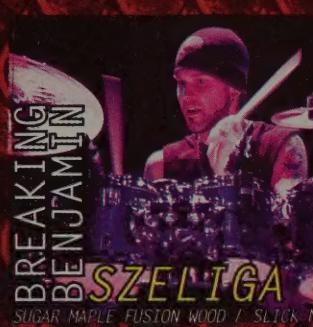


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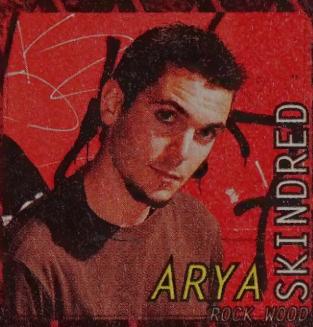
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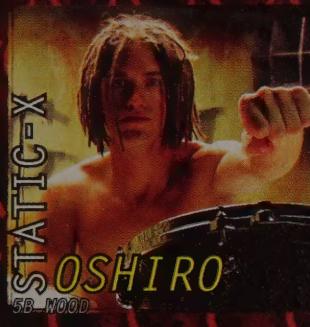


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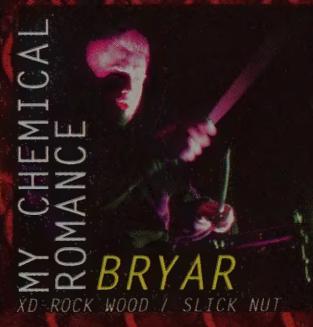


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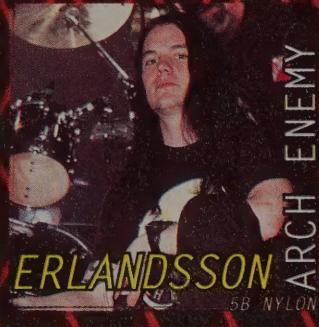
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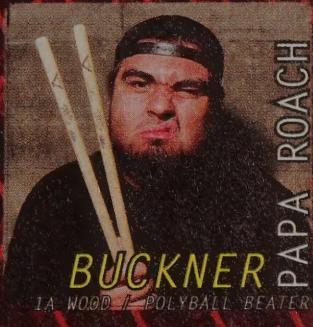
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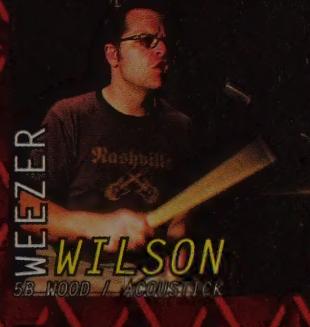


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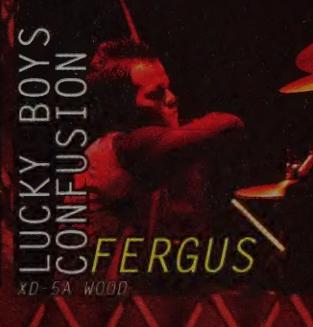


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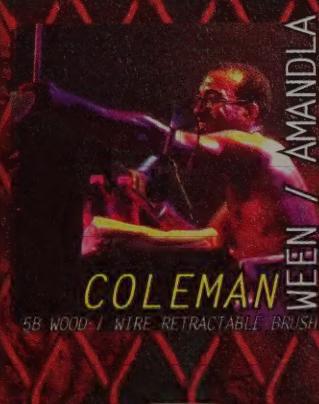
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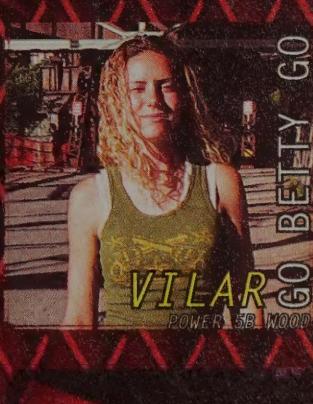
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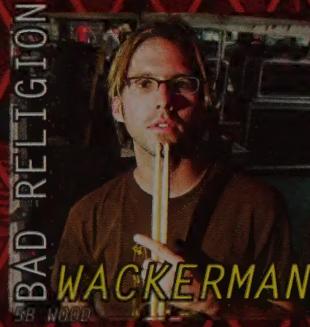


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CAUGHT IN THE ACT

BY DAMON LANCASTER

NINE INCH NAILS

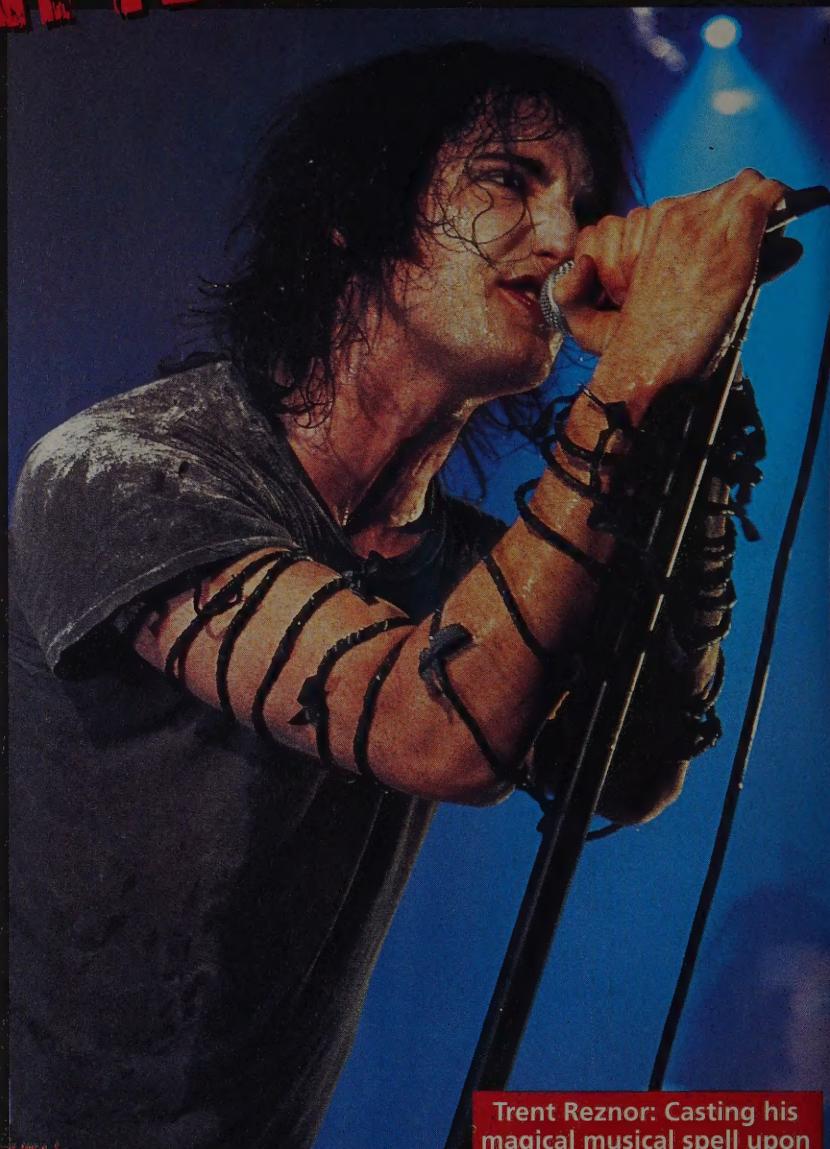
Nine Inch Nails had drawn what might best be termed an "eclectic" crowd to the mid-town arena in which they were scheduled to perform that evening. Some in attendance were dressed to-the-max in "alternative" cool, taking on a casual appearance that one sensed was as studied and deliberate as could be. Others looked like they had just stepped out of some near-by halfway house, clad in rarely-washed jeans and strategically ripped T-shirts. And then there were those who had wandered by just to see what was going on with rock's most mysterious band; they were dressed more like preppies on parade than any sort of true rock and roll animals. Yet, somehow, all seemed relatively at home as they stood in line to see Trent Reznor and his crew. Maybe the attraction was the fact that NIN hadn't been seen nor heard in these parts for the better part of four years—or maybe it was just because that night's show was the unquestioned "in" place to be. Whatever the reason, some two hours before show time the sold-out concert was the epicenter for a bee-hive of related activity.

On near-by street corners bootleg T-shirt vendors were doing a brisk business, selling their wares for \$12 each—less than half of what similar products were costing inside the arena. Everywhere one looked, scalpers patrolled, flashing their hand-full of prized ducats and shouting out the universally understood two word battle cry, "who needs?" Cops milled around, seemingly oblivious to the sundry "illegal" activities taking place practically under their noses. They were there for "crowd control" according to the sergeant in charge—though this crowd seemed to be in little need of control. They were loud, they were boisterous, they were even a little obnoxious. But at least they were orderly.

Inside the arena, far away from the maddening crowd, Reznor remained oblivious to the activity going on in the streets surrounding him. NIN's main man seemed wrapped in a world all his own, quietly sitting in his dressing room getting himself psyched for that evening's show. It may have been nearly half a decade since Nine Inch Nails had last toured the world, but their reputation as one of rock's most dynamic—and unpredictable—concert attractions remained strong.

"This is the first tour that Nine Inch Nails is doing as a truly legendary force in rock and roll," a NIN spokesperson said. "Their aura has grown amazingly during the years they've been away. There's a new generation of fans out there, but I think people still realize what a great band this is. There was always a strong core follow-

"This band's aura has grown amazingly during the years they've been away."



Trent Reznor: Casting his magical musical spell upon an enthralled audience.

ing that appreciated them, but now the masses are there supporting everything that Trent does."

When they finally appeared on stage (nearly 30 minutes late) Nine Inch Nails' set was a lean, stark and hauntingly powerful blend of familiar material from such discs as *The Downward Spiral* and the *Fragile* and new songs drawn from the group's latest album, *With Teeth*. Relying on keyboards and prerecorded computer-generated tracks, as well as on the tight musicianship of the band that surrounded him, Reznor enthralled the house with his sinewy stage moves and gut-wrenching vocals. Legendary songs such as *Closer* and *Head Like A Hole* were mixed with new material to create an intense and electrically-charged performance. For over two hours Reznor had the packed throng eating out of the palm of his hand, and they seemed only too happy to worship at the Temple of Trent.

"That was the greatest show I've ever seen," one sweat-drenched fan said as he exited the arena at show's end. "I've seen 'em all; Korn, Manson, Metallica, Slipknot... you name 'em, I've been there. Nobody else can create the kind of feelings that Nine Inch Nails can. I'm honored to be here, that's how strong I feel about this band. I pity anyone who doesn't get the chance to see them live."



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BAND ON THE RISE!

SHOOTING STARS

BY ANDY SECHER



FIVESPEED

"We have supreme confidence in ourselves and in the music we make."

When, like us folks here at **Hit Parader**, you listen to new album releases for a living, you're pretty much deluged by a flood of new product on a daily basis. Oh sure, we can hear all of you out there in reader-land saying how you'd sell a body part or two to be in the position of receiving dozens of albums a week... and getting 'em all for FREE. But with that privilege comes a degree of responsibility—or at least what passes for responsibility in the world of rock and roll. You feel compelled to listen to as many of these new releases as possible, and then occasionally choose a few discs from this rockin' rabble and provide them with the kind of media coverage that will ably assist the groups in question in their quest for stardom. But sometimes out of the instrumental din and vocal racket

comes something that really sounds different and special... an album that truly stands out from the crowd. Fivespeed's **Morning Over Midnight** is just such an album.

Okay, in all honesty, maybe this disc isn't about to revolutionize the entire rock and roll industry. But the fact is that the music made by vocalist Jarred Woosley, guitarist Jesse Lacross, bassist Rob Anderson, guitarist Brad Cole and drummer Shane Addington does boldly separate itself from the pack through both its inherent melodicism and its overwhelming charm. Nah, songs like *Fair Trade*, *The Mess*

and *Blame It On You* aren't about to blow the roof off of your dump or make you throw your Slayer albums in the trash. But through the sheer energy and focus that this Arizona-based fivesome bring to their work, it seems abundantly apparent that Fivespeed have what it takes to make a significant impact on the 2005 hard rock universe.

"We're a band that spends a lot of time crafting our songs," Woosley said. "We work on 'em until we think they're as good as we can make 'em... then we work on 'em some more. I mean we like playing with power, but you can't use volume to disguise a bad melody or a poorly conceived song. It has to be there to enhance

chance of deterring them from their quest.

Over the years they've cranked out one exciting indie disc, **Trade In Your Halo**, which gave ample indication of the rugged blend of rock, emo and metal influences that this band calls home. The strong response that effort elicited from both the underground media and fans throughout the Southwest led directly to Fivespeed being invited to take part in the 2001 Warped Tour. But it wasn't until 2002 that a major label stepped forth with the promise of delivering this unit to the proverbial Promised Land. And while it took 'em an additional three years to deliver the goods which now comprise **Morning Over**

"We're a band that spends a lot of time crafting our songs."

what you've written, and that's the way we approached the material for this album."

From the moment they first got together in Phoenix back in 1998, it's been clear that the members of Fivespeed weren't about to let anyone or anything get between them and their musical goals. The mere fact that it's taken them seven years to have their first major label release hit the streets gives an indication of the dedication to the rock and roll craft shared by these five musicians. But virtually from Day One, these guys sensed that they had something special on their hands, and even the occasional band defection, recurring recording problems or what they perceived as a lingering case of industry ignorance didn't stand a

Midnight, this quintet remains intent in the belief that all their dedication and hard work will now be richly rewarded.

"We had to face a number of problems and a number of delays in order to get this record done," Woosley said. "But I can honestly say that there was never a moment that we questioned if it would happen. None of us ever gave a thought to giving up our rock and roll dreams and doing something else. We have supreme confidence in ourselves and in the music we make. I like to think you can hear that on every song on this album."

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BY PATRICK ZANETTI

PICK HIT

NO ADDRESS

Just open your eyes and ears a bit and you'll realize that we're living in a *very* interesting time for rock and roll. The mid-decade whims of the music biz seem to be indicating that there are no dominant "hair metal", "new metal", "shock rock" type of trends that are dictating the fashion and musical sensibilities of this generation of hard rocking bands. They're free to explore the various intricacies and idiosyncrasies that have long made rock and roll so successful. One of the bands that seems to be finding this new-found "freedom" particularly pleasurable is the Tallahassee, FL-based unit No Address, who throughout their debut disc, *Time Doesn't Notice*, seem to have hit upon a hard rockin' formula all their own. For vocalist Ben Lauren, guitarist Phil Moreton, guitarist Justin Long, drummer Randy Lane and bassist Bill Donaldson, the rock scene of 2005 is a place where opportunity lurks around every corner.

"We're a band that has so many influences—yet none of them dominate over the others," Lauren said. "To my way of thinking, we're a rock band, but at the same time we're not limited by anything. That's reflected in the name No Address—which kind of indicates that things are neither here nor there. The music has to be free to move where it wants to. You can hear blues in our music, but you'll also hear touches of grunge and even rap. But it's all kind of subtle. We've taken them all, tamed them as best we can, then unleashed them through our songs."

The diverse blend of musical reactants that characterize *Time Doesn't Notice* have allowed No Address to make a quick mark for themselves within the rock community. Such songs as *Perfect* and the disc's first single, *When I'm Gone*, showcase a band in full control of their artistic medium—and one not afraid to crank it up when the need calls for it. But rather than merely being master blasters who utilize volume to mask their musical deficiencies, these guys seem quite content to play just loud

enough to let their distinctive qualities shine through the musical din.

"The most important thing for us is to make sure the music we make can inspire and move people," Lauren said. "There are enough bands out there that play up the pain in life, and while we express our share of that, when you're inspired it helps to ease that pain. We make music because that's what we do to get through the world. Making this record wasn't an easy experience for us—in fact I think we all felt like we were going to go crazy during the process—but it is the proudest accomplishment of our lives."

The release of *Time Doesn't Notice* culminates a long sojourn for Lauren that began when he first started playing guitar in his mid-teens. By the age of 17, he had drifted off to college, where he studied creative writing, and it was there that he first encountered Long, a fellow student. Soon the pair had put together the first version of No Address, and by 2002 the band's current lineup had coalesced, bringing their varied backgrounds and musical tastes into the group. But a year later the unit began to sense that things were stagnating for them in and around Tallahassee, so they packed up their gear and shifted their base of operations to New Mexico. There, over the next six months, the material for *Time Doesn't Matter* slowly came together, and when it came time to record, the band decided to stay in their adopted home state to take care of business.

"New Mexico has been good to us," Lauren said. "It's a very creative environment, so when we had all the songs written we just felt very comfortable staying around Santa Fe and recording there. It worked out very well because we felt a lot of pressure, but it was mostly pressure we placed on ourselves. We just tried to listen to the music that was in our heads and then let the pieces fall where they may."

"You'll hear blues in our music, along with grunge, rap and metal."



1. Tony Rohrbough
BYZANTINE
2. Scott Wilson
DEMURGON
3. Jon Kite
DIECAST
4. Ben Parrish
DEMURGON
5. Paul Waggoner
BETWEEN THE BURNED AND ME
6. Oh! Herbert
ALL THAT REMAINS
7. Ken Susi
UNGARF
8. Buz McGrath
UNGARF
9. Dustie Waring
BETWEEN THE BURNED AND ME



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Photo by Carina Mastrolia at the New England Metal & Hardcore Festival



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They Said It!

Rock stars have a tendency to say the outrageous... the fascinating... the insightful... the amusing. All they really need is a little prodding in the right direction. That's our job here at **Hit Parader**. We call the results of our efforts, *They Said It!*

"Thankfully, we've all been around long enough at this point so that we have something of a following. But with that does come audience expectations. It can be hard to deal with those—but I think we're managing to do so quite nicely."

TOM MORELLO, AUDIOSLAVE

"What people who talk about this band retiring don't seem to realize is that I don't have anything else lined up in terms of employment. It's not like I'm going to stop playing rock and roll tomorrow, and then start working in a bank the next. This is what I do; it's all I know how to do."

ANGUS YOUNG, AC/DC

thing and then not have people like it. It was definitely a concern for us at one point. But in a way, that was beneficial to us because we never allowed ourselves to get carried away by what happened to us. The fear of failure always kept us very down-to-earth."

MIKE SHINODA, LINKIN PARK

"Our intention is always to just to write the best songs we can and make the best album we can. We're not trying to follow some formula that says we need this many hard rockers and that many softer songs. That just doesn't work."

MIKE MUSHOK, STAIND

"It seems like heavy metal, hard rock, or whatever you want to call it this week, has become 'cool' again—which means that the mainstream has embraced it and begun to corrupt it. That happens every decade or so, and it takes what is good and threatens to turn it into a cliche. I view that as a challenge. I want to make the kind of heavy music that defies that cliche and expands the realm of that kind of music."

MARILYN MANSON

"We've been successful because we've done what we've believed in. "There's no way that fans can't see right through groups that are putting on a false act up on stage. They know what's real—and that's what they respond to."

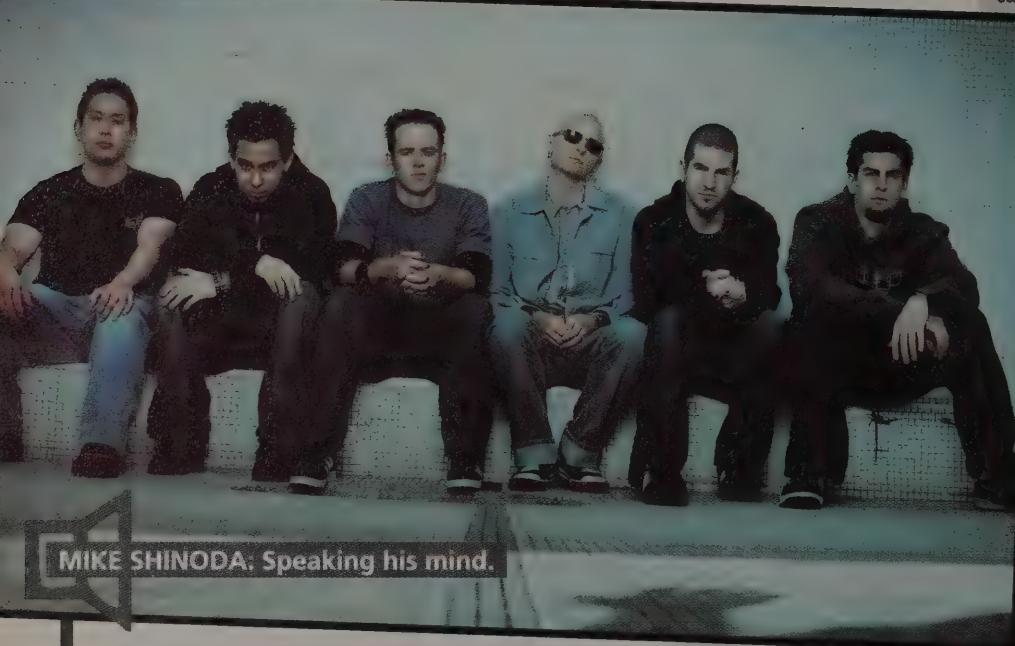
COREY TAYLOR, SLIPKNOT

"If you think about it, we had our most successful time at the height of the 'glam metal' era, and we're about as far away from glam as you can get. So it's great if different kinds of music are prospering at the moment. We'll just keep doing what we do, and then we'll see what happens."

LARS ULRICH, METALLICA

"It was a very strange feeling to realize that there are people who first learned about me as they casually flipped through their TV dials on a Tuesday night. I can imagine all the little old ladies out there seeing my face and saying, 'Who the *%&@ is that, and how the *%&@ did he ever get on television?'"

OZZY OSBOURNE



MIKE SHINODA: Speaking his mind.

"We've been on the road a lot; we've seen things, we've matured a bit. I think most of the fans can understand that and relate to it. Of course, the ones who can't are the most vocal about it."

CHINO MORENO, DEFTONES

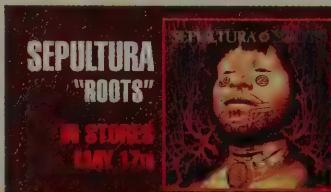
"One of the things I miss most about the early days is the contact with the fans. Back then, you not only knew a lot of the people who would come out to see you play, but you'd also have the chance to hang out with them a bit after the show. It was a lot of fun."

SULLY ERNA, GODSMACK

"In the beginning, we didn't understand the American market that well—and we probably still don't. In England, I sometimes feel like you can hire a few guys with trucks and get your albums all around the country within a day. Obviously you can't do that over here."

JUSTIN HAWKINS, THE DARKNESS

"I'd be lying if I didn't occasionally think what it would be like to put all that effort into some-



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COLLISION COURSE

HP Reviews The Latest CDs, DVDs & Anything else we darn well please!

rating system: *****awesome ****slammin' ***smokin' **lame *trash

This month we begin something new. We've asked two of our most musically savvy staffers Andy & Amy (who, by the way, have radically different rock and roll tastes) to listen to this month's top album releases and offer their insightful—though often misguided—opinions. We call this exercise in musical futility *Collision Course*.

AUDIOSLAVE, OUT OF EXILE

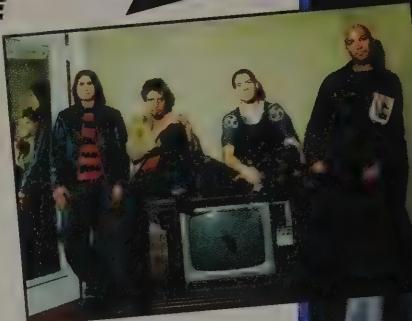
From the moment they came to somewhat shaky life back in 2003, it was obvious that Audioslave were destined for greatness. Featuring former Soundgarden vocalist Chris Cornell, along with ex-Rage Against the Machine members Tom Morello (guitar), Tim Commerford (bass) and

Brad Wilk (drums), big things were expected from Audioslave... and the band delivered. On their sophomore collection, *Out of Exile*, the band plays it surprisingly safe, presenting the same brand of emotive hard rockers that characterized their platinum-selling debut. Such tunes as *Be Yourself* and *The Curse* are presented with power, passion and purpose—commodities too rarely heard on today's rock and roll scene.

RATING: *****

I've never been a particular fan of "old school" hard rock. It had its moment in the sun TWO DECADES AGO!! Yet, if I'm forced to listen to a band that relies on the vocal and guitar histrionics that characterize the "old school" form, then Audioslave is certainly better than most. They've got the pedigree, but I miss the political rants of Rage and the smoldering intensity of Soundgarden.

RATING: ****



SYSTEM OF A DOWN, MESMERIZE

System of a Down have become one of the most successful hard rock bands in the world by continually defying every "rule" in the book. They don't look like rock stars, they don't act like rock stars, and on many of their songs, they don't even sound like rock stars. Yet somehow, this eclectic West Coast unit has created a legacy for inventive song craftsmanship and dynamic instrumental interplay that has already made them legends. This quartet seem certain to add to that fast-growing legacy



with **Hypnotize**, the first of a two record set (**Mesmerize** will emerge in the fall) where this band's unique view of the world is put on bold display. SOAD have never been for everyone—and that is certainly once again the case here. But if you love inventive, unpredictable hard rock than this is clearly a Must Have collection.

RATING: ****

I've never been a fan of System of a Down, and after hearing **Hypnotize** I realize I never will be. For me, sitting through a second



AUDIOSLAVE



SYSTEM OF A DOWN

The Indies

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

THE AGONY SCENE *The Darkest Red* (Roadrunner)

After releasing a self-titled album on Solid State Records, Oklahoma's The Agony Scene went through line up changes and even broke up for a brief period of time. Lucky for fans of unapologetically feral metalcore, TAS got back together and have made a glorious racket on the bitter, bloodshot **The Darkest Red**. This newly revitalized, solidified line up has delivered an album that's darkly angry and ugly, but **The Darkest Red** is also harder and heavier than a chunk of granite, and it's anchored by thoroughly mosh-worthy breakdowns, Swedish metal riffery a la At The Gates, balls out double bass drumming, and frontman Mike Williams screams, where he sounds like he's swallowed a batch of razorblades. But it's Williams' wholly unique talk-sing style that's most mesmerizing on tracks like *Prey* and *Procession*. Red doesn't get any darker than this, kids.

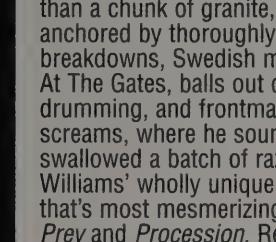


FOR FANS OF: Slipknot, Lamb Of God, Himsa, At The Gates
STARS: ***

STILL REMAINS *Of Love And Lunacy* (Roadrunner)

Finally! A new metalcore band that *doesn't* sound like everything else out there. Still Remains are fresh and

unique, and they more than stand out in a stale, overcrowded, and now stagnant genre. **Of Love And Lunacy** is a well-mixed blend of American metalcore and European metal. It's got sung and screamed vocal patterns, and melodic choruses catchier than germs in a sick ward. Seriously, the singalong parts are so memorable, they'll tattoo themselves on your cortex. You'll be singing them for hours after you shut this disc off. The album also has thick, hardcore



dancefloor friendly breakdowns. Those are the American metalcore qualities of **Of Love And Lunacy**. The keyboards give the record its distinctly and undeniably European flavor. The keys here are quite reminiscent of Soilwork, but better. It looks as though this Grand Rapids, MI crew, on *White Walls, To Live And Die By Fire*, and *Bliss*, has invented its own genre with **Of Love And Lunacy**, and we're calling it AmeriEurometalcore.

FOR FANS OF: Soilwork, As I Lay Dying, Bleeding Through,

Atreyu
STARS: ***

KYLSA *To Walk A Middle Course* (Prosthetic)

You may want to throw yourself in the shower (with massive quantities of soap and disinfectant) after you listen to



Kylesa's noisier-than-a-dump-truck-in-a-nitroglycerin-plant release, **To Walk A Middle Course**. That's because Kylesa manufacture grimy, bottom heavy rock 'n roll, coated in a thick, caked on film of dirt, dust and distortion. To boot, Kylesa boasts a rock chick named Laura Pleasants in its ranks, and she really shows that she has no qualms about showing her masculine side and playing with the boys, since she knuckles down and barks like both a woman scorned and possessed. She isn't afraid to throw down with the boys, and **To Walk A Middle Course** is a grungier, more brutal album for it.

FOR FANS OF: High On Fire, Planes, Mistaken For Stars, Deadguy
STARS: ***

IMPALED *Death After Life* (Century Media)

Gore metal. That sums up Impaled's **Death After Life** in a single bound. Grossing out listeners with lyrical references to unpleasant medical procedures like enemas seems

The Indies

to be one of this Oakland band's main goals, but it's not their singular goal. The quartet strives to reawaken the tired death metal genre, even if it is in a sickening way. Impaled stampede over their instruments with force and speed, and as a result, **Death After Life** is a groove-oriented, Florida-style death metal album that sounds as though it came from the mid '80s. The bile encrusted guitar work is thrashy and technically impressive, and the triple vocal attack of Ross Sewage (!), Sean McGrath, and Jason Kocol keep things from getting banal and boring, but **Death After Life** isn't anything we *haven't* heard before.

FOR FANS OF: Bloodbath, Cannibal Corpse, Gorefest
STARS: **

ORIGIN Echoes Of Decimation

(Relapse)

After one complete run through of **Echoes Of Decimation**, listeners might wonder if the members of Origin took a month long nap after writing and recording this headbanging monster. The album pummels from start to finish, without ever taking a pause or a breath. It's full of Cookie Monster death growls, bloody fast riffs, and double bass drumming. If you've got weak nerves, then this won't be something you revisit every day. You might want to toss this death metal opus into your CD player or in your iPod while you are working out with a speed bag or on the treadmill, because the tension escalates with each song. You won't want to listen to it when you're trying to relax or do something detail-oriented, because this will throw your concentration.

FOR FANS OF: Morbid Angel, Suffocation, Deicide
STARS: **

HERMANO Dare I Say?

(Meteor City)

These days, most stoner rock bands are indecipherable. Every song by every band starts to sound eerily alike. In fact, stoner rock is like the *Stepford Wives* of rock 'n' roll. Jams, distorted, low-end, fuzzed out riffs, and creamy, sexy vocals are the order of the day on most stoner rock albums. Hermano's **Dare I Say?** possesses all those sonic traits. But it's the

absolutely luscious vocals of frontman John Garcia, who cut his teeth in Kyuss, who are considered royalty among the stoner rock set, that set Hermano apart from their peers. Garcia's soulful, slightly feminine pipes are a perfect complement to the band's axe packin' sound. **Dare I Say?** is the kind of album you crank with the top down when driving cross the country in the middle of summer.

FOR FANS OF: Kyuss, Queens Of The Stone Age, Fatso Jetson
STARS: ***

CLEAR CONVICTIONS Warning

(Facedown)

Facedown Records is a record label that puts out some of the most terrifyingly heavy music out there. A lot of labels can lay claim to such a fact, but the catch with Facedown is that most of their bands are Christian bands that always give glory to God. Clear Convictions may thank God in their liner notes, but the music isn't soft or gentle, as one might assume, given the fact that the members celebrate their faith. In fact, **Warning** is a 28-minute slaughterhouse, full of choppy breakdowns a la Hatebreed. Clear Convictions manufacture their thoroughly abrasive music with the brutest of force.

FOR FANS OF: Hatebreed, Madball, Indecision, Most Precious Blood
STARS: **

SIX FEET UNDER

13 (Metal Blade)

Another year, another Six Feet Under record. The former Cannibal Corpse frontman (and controversial lyricist, thanks to his gory, almost horrific and sometimes misogynist tales) known as Chris Barnes doesn't stray from his formula of mid-tempo grooves, vocal acrobatics that stem from deep, dark barks to pig-like squeals. If anything, this Florida band is consistent, but Barnes and crew don't do anything to turn the corner on **13**. While 2003's *Bringer Of Blood* was a bit of a misstep, due to Barnes' political ranting, **13** reminds us of SFU's choppy, most impressive album, 1997's *Warpath*. While critics have always considered SFU to be death metal lite, **13** hacks with deep grooves and harsh vocalizations that should require Barnes to *not* speak 2 hours before and 2 hours after each of his live performances. **13:** Decent? Sure? Essential? Unfortunately, no.

FOR FANS OF: Obituary, Cannibal Corpse
STARS: **

play of this album was nothing short of work. The few pleasurable moments were quickly offset by the band's grating musical approach and shock-for-shock's sake lyrical pose. Sorry to say, this ain't for me.

RATING: ****

CORROSION OF CONFORMITY, IN THE ARMS OF GOD

There was a time back in the mid-'90s (around when their disc *Deliverance* placed them on the verge of international stardom) when Corrosion of Conformity seemed ready to break BIG. But the band's sometimes delicate internal chemistry, as well as vocalist/guitarist Pepper Keenan's desire to work with former Pantera vocalist Phil Anselmo in Down, seemed to continually sidetrack to COC gang. Now in 2005 they're ready, willing and able to return to the scene with **In The Arms of God**. This is a disc that stands true to the COC legacy... while sounding unquestionably dated in its style and approach. Mind you, that's not necessarily a bad thing, but songs like *Stone Breaker* and *Paranoid Opioid* sometimes come across like dinosaurs lurking among us.

RATING: ****

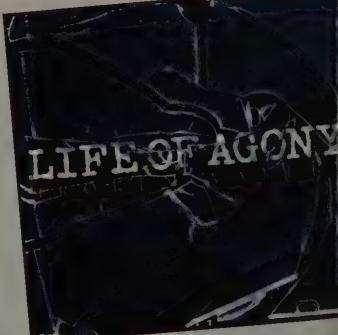
The first thing I noticed about Corrosion of Conformity's **In The Arms of God** is how gosh-darn loooong it is. There are four songs tracking in at over 6 minutes, with one, *Never Turns to More*, coming in at 8:21. I didn't know bands were "allowed" to do that any more. The whole disc runs for well over an hour (not that I'm counting!) and for the most part I've heard all of this before, in one manner or another. Still, there are just enough exciting guitar-driven moments to keep most fans satisfied.

RATING: ***

LIFE OF AGONY, BROKEN VALLEY

When they broke apart in the late '90s, few followers of the East Coast metal scene held out much hope that there would be a happy ending for

Life of Agony. Let's face it, such an up-beat fate just seemed to run against the grain of this band's musical makeup. But lo-and-behold, in mid-2005 not only do we find ourselves confronted by a reunited LOA lineup, but also a new disc, **Broken Valley**, that stands as the pinnacle of the group's





storied career. Intense, yet melodic, the music featured throughout this effort is some of the most emotive around, and whether you're a long-time LOA follower wallowing in the warmth of the band's return, or a newcomer who may first be discovering this unit's powerful approach, **Broken Valley** is a winner!

RATING: ****

I was very pleasantly surprised by Life of Agony's **Broken Valley**. From name and reputation I was expecting to encounter another of those "buffalo bellow" hardcore groups whose sole purpose in life is to annoy as many people as possible. In stark contrast, on songs like *Love to Let You Down* and *Wicked Ways*, there are memorable song structures everywhere. Color me surprised!

RATING: ****

DARK NEW DAY, TWELVE YEAR SILENCE

Rumors surrounding the new "supergroup"

Dark New Day have been racing through the rock scene even since former Sevendust guitarist Clint Lowery split from that unit to team with his bass-beating brother Corey (formerly of Stuck Mojo) and form Dark New Day. And while the contents of the band's debut disc, **Twelve Year Silence** (which makes titular reference to the lengthy period between times these guys last played together) is strong, it too-often fails to live up to the hype. Indeed, in some ways DnD is not as strong as the sum of its collective parts; this is a solid band with a solid group of songs. But even after repeated listenings, few—if any—stand out from the crowd.

RATING: **

Okay, I admit that I'm a sucker for this kind of stuff, but I *love* this album. Sure, it has flavorings of Sevendust, but that's understandable when you consider Clint Lowery's role in the band. But **Twelve Years of Silence** is a totally unique effort, one that marks Dark New Day as one of the true bright spots of the hard rock year.

RATING: ****

DARK NEW DAY



Quick Reviews

Fast Reviews At A Glance

**JUDAS PRIEST,
ANGEL OF RET-
RIBUTION**
RATING: ****

**MUDVAYNE,
LOST AND
FOUND**
RATING: ***

**OZZY
OSBOURNE,
Prince Of
Darkness**
RATING: ****

**MOTLEY CRUE,
RED, WHITE &
CRUE**
RATING: ****

**BLACK LABEL
SOCIETY,
MAFIA**
RATING: ***

**RAMMSTEIN,
REISE, REISE**
RATING: ****

**LACUNA COIL,
COMALIES**
RATING: ***

**SHADOWS FALL,
THE WAR WITHIN**
RATING: ****

**A PERFECT
CIRCLE,
eMOTIVE**
RATING: ****

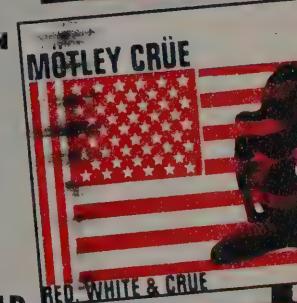
**CHEVELLE,
THIS TYPE OF
THINKING (COULD
DO US IN)**
RATING: ****

**ALTER BRIDGE,
ALTER BRIDGE**
RATING: ****

**SALIVA,
SURVIVAL OF
THE SICKEST**
RATING: ****

**SCORPIONS,
UNBREAKABLE**
RATING: ***

**MARILYN
MANSON,
LEST WE
FORGET**
RATING: ****



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OZZY: Rumors continue to swirl through the rock world that at the completion of Black Sabbath's summer-long run, Ozzy Osbourne plans on getting back into the recording studio to complete his first solo disc in nearly five years. With his recent Prince of Darkness "hits" set ranking as a bona fide smash, it seems as if demand for some new Ozz solo stuff is at an all-time high. "Ozzy hasn't told me exactly what he wants to do," said Ozzy guitarist Zakk Wylde. "But there has been a lot of talk about getting back in there and making some new music. I hope it happens."

NINE INCH NAILS: With critical response to *With Teeth* jumping "off the charts", Nine Inch Nails, mastermind, has slowly been integrating more of the

new disc's material into the group's live set. When the NIN crew first played live shows back in March, only a few songs from the collection (including the single *The Hand that Feeds*) were featured. Now, on certain nights, as many as half-a-dozen new tracks may be included in the NIN set. "Trent's confidence is at an all-time high right now," a source said. "He's loving the reaction this music is getting."

STAIND: With the release of their latest disc, *Chapter V*, the members of Staind believe they have come through one of the most difficult times of their professional lives. With their long-time record label being absorbed by a larger company back in 2004, and many of their closest label confidants being let go,

this New England-based band felt almost as if they were staring over this time around. "This may be Chapter V for us, but it almost feels like Chapter I," said guitarist Mike Mushok. "There was a feeling-out process where we had to get used to a lot of new people, and they had to get used to us. But I think it's all worked out for the best."

KORN: Despite the departure of guitarist Brian "Head" Welch earlier this year, the members of Korn have kept quite busy. Indeed, there is talk that the group's upcoming release (now scheduled for November) may prove to be a two-disc set. The band has been working on the new music as a four piece, with James "Munky" Shaffer handling all the guitar responsibilities. "We have so many songs written already," Davis said. "There are a couple of really funky 'old school' songs, and some things that are really heavy."

SEVENDUST: Following the departure of founding member/guitarist Clint Lowery to form Dark New Day (with his brother Corey), Sevendust have recruited former Snot guitarist Sonny Mayo as their newest member. And not wasting any time, not only has the revised band begun writing for their next album, they've already completed a tour of intimate venues across the nation. "This has been one of my favorite bands for a very long time," Mayo said. "So having the chance to join them has been a true blessing for me. I couldn't be happier about the way things have worked out."

SYSTEM OF A DOWN: So how will the members of System of a Down know it's the right time to release the second half of their *Hypnotize*/*Mezmerize*

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disc package? According to guitarist Daron Malakian, the fans will let the band know. "It really depends on how well the first album does," he said. "We'll probably wait until things start to slow down a bit with that one before the second one comes out. But no matter when it's released, they are companion pieces, and should be looked upon that way."

IRON MAIDEN: So why is Iron Maiden bailing out on the last seven dates of the summer-long *Ozzfest* run? The fact of the matter is that *everyone* was well aware of the circumstances even before the Maiden Metal Machine agreed to co-headline this year's Fest back in the spring. "We had European festival commitments that we simply couldn't—and wouldn't—break," said bassist Steve Harris. "Everyone involved with *Ozzfest* knew what was happening, and there was no problem. We would love to have completed the tour, but it was an impossibility."

JUDAS PRIEST: So how excited are the members of Judas Priest about returning to State-side arenas for the first time in nearly 15 years? Vocalist Rob Halford can barely contain his glee. "This is what we thought about when we first talked of working together again," he said. "We spoke about making an album, then touring across the States, playing the biggest arenas we could find. Thankfully, the support of the fans has made our dreams a reality."

ANTHRAX: So perhaps the metal world hasn't been turned upside down by the news that Anthrax best-known lineup (Scott Ian, Joey Belladonna, Danny Spitz, Charlie Benante and Frank Bello) has reformed. But the mere fact that this lineup (which recorded the group's best known disc, *State of Euphoria*) has gotten back together after 13 years apart says some important things about the current state of the heavy metal world. "The fans seem to want this," Ian said. "I guess there's a bit of a nostalgia trip going on with a lot of people."

MOTLEY CRUE: What lies ahead for Motley Crue? What was originally rumored to be their "farewell" tour has gone so well that there is now talk of the band doing a new album. Of course, that will only happen if the health of guitarist Mick Mars continues to improve, and drummer Tommy Lee and vocalist Vince Neil can continue to get along. "I never want to put limits on what this band can or can't do," said bassist Nikki Sixx.

SLIPKNOT: The members of Slipknot admit that they were far-from-pleased when unforeseen union-enforced time constraints forced them to drop all the support acts from their hugely successful *Subliminal Verses Tour*. The tour rocked on as planned, with the Knot still sharing the stage with road partners Shadows Fall and Lamb of God. "It was too bad," said vocalist Corey Taylor. "It was a great opportunity for young, upcoming bands to showcase themselves in front of a lot of people. But this got out of hand... it couldn't be helped."

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Mudvayne vocalist Chad Gray, guitarist Greg Tribbett, bassist Ryan Martinie and drummer Matt McDonough patiently sat waiting for one media briefing to end and the next to begin. It had been that way for the better part of two days for the Mudvayne crew as they did their best to explain the intricacies of their latest album, *Lost and Found*, to a legion of rock scribes who had landed on the band's musical doorstep from both near and far. It was a veritable Tower of Babel (or in this case, babble) as interviewers from Germany, Japan and Sweden mixed with their American magazine brethren in their attempts to gain the greatest insight and attain the "ultimate" quote from these Illinois-based metal merchants.

Through it all, however, the members of Mudvayne seemed to take everything very much in stride. Indeed, they seemed quite pleased by the strong (and uniformly positive) reaction that their third disc had already generat-

session had turned out to be a major positive for all involved—the media folks had gotten what they needed, and Mudvayne had gotten what they wanted... a major push to promote the arrival of their new album.

"We actually enjoy talking about our music," Gray said. "We always have. Sometimes the questions get a little strange, and a little away from where we'd like them to be, but it's nothing we can't handle. When you talk to a lot of people from all over the place about what you've created you begin to get an accurate picture of how

opening the doors for the mass commercial success Mudvayne so deeply craves. Following as it does in the wake of the band's groundbreaking 2001 release *L.D. 50* and 2003's highly acclaimed *The End of All Things to Come*, their third album represents a major shift in attitude, design and execution—though Tribbett would prefer the disc to be viewed as a major "focusing" of the band's creative energies rather than a radical revamping of their artistic perspectives.

"In a lot of ways *Lost and Found* combines the best elements of the first two albums," he

MUDVAYNE IDENTITY FOUND

BY TED ARMSTRONG

"Playing at Ozzfest has been great exposure for us."



ed, and were only too happy to reveal the "secrets" behind such songs as *Just, Pushing Through*, and their controversial new single, *I'm Determined*. Sure, there may have been a grime or two when they were asked for the 40th time that day why they had chosen to drop their trademark shock-rock garb in favor of a more traditional look. And yes, there may have been a sigh of resolve when the Vayne were queried yet again about their feelings towards Slipknot. But as a whole, it seemed like this give-and-take

they're reacting to it. I think the media has grown to respect us, and we have a mutual respect for them... most of the time."

One of the reasons for the band's high degree of media patience this time around is that they realize exactly how important the success of *Lost and Found* will be to directing their ongoing career fortunes. They also know that a slew of positive reviews and some insightful print and on-air analysis of their latest guitar-driven masterwork will go a long way towards

said. "We wanted to capture the raw qualities that were on *L.D. 50*, and combine those with some of the depth that we brought to *The End of All Things to Come*. So what we ended up with here is a very complex sounding, brilliantly produced album that has a lot of very raw, rough edges. It's kind of like the best of both worlds for us."

Recorded in California (with producer Dave Fortman) during a two month stretch late last year, in many ways *Lost and Found* does represent Mudvayne's coming of age. Rather than relying on the rugged sci-fi simplicity of their debut, or the mathematically-perfect precision used so effectively on their sophomore effort, this time around the band has created a more three-dimensional, through no less powerful approach that perfectly reflects their new, "music first" credo. With their face paint in storage and their other-worldly cos-

turnes locked away, the Vayne know that this time around they're gonna sink or swim on the strength of their music alone. The notion doesn't intimidate them one iota.

"That's exactly what we wanted," Gray said. "We wanted everyone to listen to the music and not get distracted by our image. Our look served its purpose by getting us noticed in the beginning. But now we want to shift that attention back to where it belongs. This is the album that will do that."

Still, despite their decision to do away with some of their more outwardly theatrical trappings, it's still not beyond the Mudvayne men to pull out all the stops when the time is right. A prime example of that can be witnessed in the video for their new disc's first single, *F'n Determined*, which was filmed in a former New York City church back in October. While long-time band observers may miss the most overtly shocking aspects of the band's approach, the new-found intensity and creepiness that invades the unit's on-stage style more than compensates for this loss.

"It is different," Tribbett said. "But it's also better for us. Making the video took a lot of thought and planning, but it turned out exactly the way we wanted it to. It was vital for us to communicate where Mudvayne was in 2005, and we think this video did that perfectly."

Even before *Lost and Found* was released in late March, Mudvayne were already doing everything in their power to properly promote it. In addition to releasing their video for *F'n Determined* and doing dozens of media interviews, the band undertook a tour of hip, but unusually tiny venues in order to reach their core constituency. They knew this wasn't the tour designed to make money or satisfy the metal masses. Rather it was the

"Lost & Found combines the best elements on our first two albums."

band's way of both thanking their most loyal followers, and attracting some additional interest in their latest project.

"It was very exciting for us to play in legendary places like CBGB's in New York," Gray said. "That place has so much history, but it's the size of a big living room. You can get maybe a couple of hundred people in there. But it was exciting, and we knew the people who came to that show were the real fans. We'll be playing bigger places later in the year. In fact, there's talk of us doing some really *big* shows in the not-too-distant future. But for us that was the perfect way to kick off what is probably going to be the most important year of our lives."



"The focus is where it now needs to be."

LOG

LEADING THE CHARGE

LOG

One of the oldest cliches in the book goes "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make 'em drink." Ahhh... we can already hear everyone reading this say, "What the heck does that have to do with rock and roll?" Well, the answer—even in our admittedly convoluted minds—is this: Take the case of Lamb of God. Just a few months ago they were the unquestioned "it" band of the heavy metal moment. This Virginia-based unit found themselves plastered on magazine covers and tied in with major national tours. Indeed, with the release of their latest album (and major label debut) *Ashes of the Wake*, vocalist Randy Blythe, guitarist Mark Morton, guitarist Willie Adler, drummer Chris Adler and bassist John Campbell suddenly became the flagship franchise of the entire "underground" heavy metal movement.

BY ROB ANDREWS

Still, it seems rather strange that after a decade of slogging through the outer reaches of the metal empire, Lamb of God suddenly find themselves at the epicenter of a media-sponsored feeding frenzy. After all, this band's brand of metal is as uncompromising and as powerful as a runaway freight train, and their ten years of experience—which yielded a slew of critically-acclaimed, but commercial overlooked independent discs such as *New American Gospel* and *As the Palaces Burn*—has allowed the quintet to develop well-deserved confidence in their off-center sound and style. Yet following their eye-popping run at last summer's *Ozzfest*, and the wide-ranging kudos heaped upon *Ashes of the Wake*, there's no way of avoiding the notion that much of the on-going success of the "underground uprising" will hinge upon LOG's continued commercial ascension.

"We've always gone against the grain of what a metal band is supposed to sound like," Chris Adler said. "Because of that, we perhaps haven't enjoyed the kind of recognition that we've always believed our music merited. That's all changing with this album. With this record we allowed our instincts and experiences to shape each song as a piece of the larger picture. We let the songs dictate their own agendas instead of pushing individual agendas."

On their latest collection, Lamb Of God show that rather than following metal convention in song structure, lyrical content or even production values, they have chosen to walk their own creative path. From the thrashing power of *What I've Become* and *The Faded Line* to the more progressive feel that dominates *Hourglass*, this is an album destined to radically set LOG apart from the rest of the contemporary metal

"Touring with Slipknot has opened a lot of doors for us."

LOG

"You know, I've gotta tell you, the number of albums we sell isn't the Number One thing on our minds all the time," Chris Adler said. "A band like ours has been doing this for a while. We know that we have a certain audience, and we always want to expand upon that. But we don't judge the quality of our albums by the number of copies they sell. If we did, we probably would have given up years ago."

So what does all this say about the current state of the heavy metal world... and the role that Lamb of God play in that scene? Perhaps it says that decidedly out-of-the-mainstream bands like LOG (as well as cohorts ranging from Meshuggah and Mastodon to Atreyu and Shadows Fall) need to find a way of making their music somewhat more palatable to a wider audience. Or perhaps it means that these bands (and the record labels that support them) need to simply be a little more patient as they wait for the metal mainstream to slowly drift in their somewhat non-conventional direction. Either way, it seems as if metal's much-ballyhooed Underground Revolution is reaching a quick and perhaps unexpected crisis point... not that you'd know it by the reaction of Lamb of God's members.

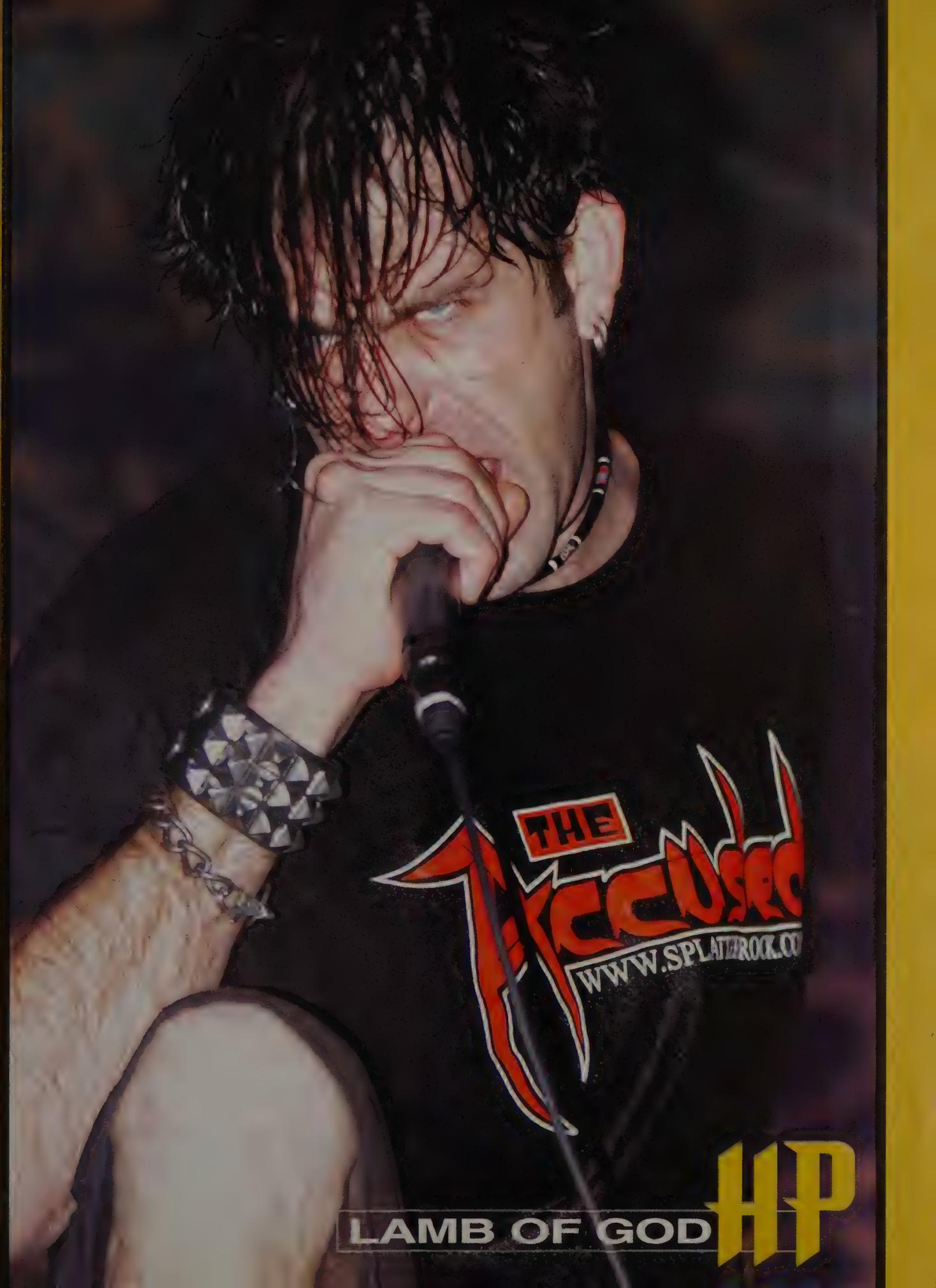
"There's always been a real strong camaraderie between a lot of these bands," Chris Adler said. "We've toured together and spent time hangin' out. It's all real cool. But I don't think any one of us has ever viewed what we do as any sort of 'movement.' That's strictly something the media has created. And I've got no problem with that. If it makes a few more people aware of us, then it's cool."

crowd. Indeed, the inherent diversity of this band's approach has already made them one of the most talked-about metal bands on earth, in part due to their eclectic, eccentric but totally electric sound.

"A album where every song sounds basically the same can desensitize you," Morton said. "This album has a few built-in reset buttons to refresh your ears before getting back to the 'flamethrower' songs."

Part progressive rock prophets, part new-age messiahs, part thrash metal masters, this fearsome five-some seem determined to be all things to all people... at least to all people who like things decidedly different, and decidedly heavy. As they continue to tour the world in support of *Ashes of the Wake*, it is clear that after a decade of struggle the time is right for Lamb of God to rise to a position of prominence in the unsettled metal kingdom. The question now becomes how long they can hold on to such a distinction.

"We play music that straddles the line between progressive rock and what you may want to call traditional rock," Campbell said. "I think we make prog-rock more listenable without cheapening the progressiveness of it. The complexity of our music appeals to people who like technical playing, but the arrangements are not so extreme that they fly over the average listener's head. It's a good balance. Each album we've done has been a snapshot in time for us. It shows who we are and what we're capable of doing, both individually and as a band. We've continued to grow, and the new album is certainly no exception. Right now, we've never been better at making seriously kick-ass music."



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LAMB OF GOD

HP

COMIN' AT YOU

SAME QUESTION, DIFFERENT BANDS

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

This month's edition of *Comin' At You* explores the life of musicians when they are *not* on tour. While going on a trip is a typical way to break routine for most of us, being at home is *not* the norm for most musicians. Record sales are where the record labels make the money, and on the tour circuit is how the musician survives and earns his keep. It's how he can afford to eat and support himself, relatively speaking. Performance payouts and merch (shirt and CD) sales are what puts money in a musician's pocket. Here, we ask a slew of musicians what they do when they are out of their element and at home for extended periods of time! They really had to think about their answers to the *Comin' Atcha* questions of naming a mere five things they do when *not* on the road because they are on the road so much. Read on, please.

HIGH ON FIRE:

High On Fire just released their new album, **Blessed Black Wings**, through Relapse Records. It's a slimy 'n grimy slab of hard rock that transcends the 'stoner rock' tag, yet pays homage to Black Sabbath and their legacy. Our favorite song is *Devilution*. We spoke to singer/guitarist Matt Pike about what he does on his days off. From the road, that is.

*"I do things that normal dudes do. I work at a bar, and work the door, and I get paid to sit there and drink. The drinks are free if you work there," Pike says. That's *not* that much different from being on the road, now is it? Most clubs give the band's free drinks at the bar or on their rider.

*Pike partakes in a lot of visual entertainment while at home, spending his time seeing movies and playing lots of video games. He also drives around and goes for hikes in the mountains, exercising his body as well as his mind!

*"I also hang out with my girlfriend," the singer/guitarist explains. Makes sense. Definitely one of the creature comforts of home. Props to the women who able to handle the long periods of distance when dating a musician.

*Bust out the nunchucks, the gee, and the Chinese stars, because Pike, while not a Black Belt, used to partake in the martial arts. "I used to but I don't have the money anymore. I haven't gotten back on the wagon." Here's to hoping he gets back to earning a 'degree' in self-defense. Anyone wanna start the Matt Pike Martial Arts Fund?

*While at home, he does engage in a road activity. "I play guitar, as well. I have a side band that takes up some of my time. It's a punk rock band called Scum Angel. I get wasted and fight with the crowd, sometimes." Apparently, Pike proves you can temporarily take the man out of the band, but you can't take the band out of the man, even on off days.



STRAPPING YOUNG LAD:

Strapping Young Lad, who have just released the noisy, chaotic **Alien** (Century Media), is the brainchild of frontman Devin Townsend, who is both a genius and a madman. A neurotic hellion on his best day, we can't imagine the hyperactive Townsend, who works in several different bands at once, calming down enough to relax on his off days. Somebody get this man some Ritalin! He's definitely got a mind that runs wild, and that produces creative strokes of brilliance. Townsend's down time is the most active of all the musicians we spoke to for this column!

*"Work, work, work, work, and work!" Mr. Townsend works a lot.

*He also enjoys quite the caffeine fix. "I drink tons of black coffee. A stupid amount of black coffee. When the sun goes down, I smoke [weed]. But only when the sun is down. I don't want to do it all day, every day. I like to reserve it for the night when it's cooler out," he explains.

*"When I'm not working or drinking coffee, I think," says Townsend. "I think about thinking, and the spiral gives me a headache. If I am not doing Strapping, then I work on something else." Excedrin will help with the headaches, Devin!

*Sleep is also on the menu when he's not touring. Musicians are sleep-deprived. This is the one answer that is repeated by musicians, even ones not interviewed for this column.

*Driving is another activity the musical madman engages in "I've got a car and it's a bubble to be by myself in and I can listen to whatever I'm working on in the car stereo," he says. Efficient? Indeed. But here's to hoping he listens to stuff by the much mellower Devin Townsend Band, as opposed to the blistering cacophony of Strapping Young Lad since the latter is apt to give Townsend a case of road rage!

ROGER MIRET OF AGNOSTIC FRONT/THE DISASTERS

Roger Miret probably doesn't see the inside of his home for more than a few days at a time. This is a man with two bands, the legendary NYHC act Agnostic Front, who've just issued **Another Voice** through Nuclear Blast America as well as street punk rock band Roger Miret and The Disasters, who've just released **1984** (Hellcat). Miret started the low pressure The Disasters because he wrote songs that wouldn't work in AF, so he just started another vehicle for these songs. Miret is a man of many hats, but he had a few minutes to tell *Hit Parader* what his does on his extended period of days off.

*When not on the road with AF or The Disasters, the studio is where you can find Mr. Miret. "I'm usually in the studio writing or just trying to get some kind of down time," he explains.

*Car culture is a part of Miret's life. "I started a car club [Rumblers CC] with a bunch of friends and we get together and work on cars, and go to Hot Rod and Custom car culture events and just enjoy some beers." How cool is this hobby? 100% cool!

*When he's not in front of the mic, he's behind the boards, producing bands. "I've been involved in producing a bunch of bands, including The Disasters," says Miret. "Production work is just as stressful as the band thing because, with each release, my name is tied in and I always want to give it my best." Music is obviously this man's entire life!

*But so is his family, namely his wife and child, who he tries to spend time with. "This doesn't happen very often especially because of my very active, two band situation," Miret laments. "But I do like to spend time with my wife Denise and daughter Nadia."

*Even more elusive than time with his two main girls is sleep. "This happens even less," he laughs. "I've always got something to do but I have a very comfortable, expensive bed that really does the job right. Sleeping in bunks or different hotel beds every night isn't as rewarding as my home bed!" Ain't that the truth! Aspiring musicians, enjoy sleeping in your bed, tucked in under those sheets while you can. Because one day, you too will be slogging it out on the road, sleeping in a bus on a hard, foreign bed.

EMANUEL

Emanuel singer Matt Breen says, "Time off for band dudes is a sacred thing. It's kind of ironic, because you travel all the time for work, and go home for vacation!" Yep, bands have it in reverse. Work is travel. Home is vacation. For a young, new band like Louisville's Emanuel, who've just released **Soundtrack To A Headrush** (Vagrant), touring is the most grass roots, most essential way to turn kids on to your music. **Soundtrack** is a catchy and bouncy, yet totally fiery punk rock record. Breen reflected on his off days, and said this about his band's music. "When we write songs, we always make sure they are the truth. The lyrics have to be completely honest, no matter how vulnerable or terrible," he says. "It's also really important to us that our guitar tone is skull crushing and unstoppable, so that we may destroy any opposition easily with the power of rock." Amen. Read on.



*Hang. That's primary for Breen. "I like to visit all my friends that I never get to see anymore," the singer says. "These same people that I used to spend time with all have full time jobs and stacks of bills. It makes me feel like a slacker." Slacker? No way! Being a road dog takes a strong mental and physical make up. Let's see how many people can go for 2-3 days without a shower after doing physically rigorous, wholly sweaty on stage performances! We got your back, Matt.

*Drink. That's another activity that Breen participates in. He says, "People mistake Louisville for being some Midwest farm town, and I always defend it with the statement that 'It's the 13th largest metropolitan area in the country!' But as it turns out there really isn't a hell of a lot to do here except go to the bars, and we have a lot of them." Jagerbombs and cheap champagne are his drinks of choice.

*Sleep. A popular answer among touring dudes, it seems. "When I'm home, I don't get up before 2 PM. Not only do I sleep in a sleeping bag on tour, but touring bands have to get up early and drive to make it to the show on time. So when I'm home, I like to stretch out on my queen sizer and waste every minute of every day." How can we begrudge him that? Oh, right. We can't.

*Jam. Another popular answer. While not touring is like having time off, most musicians scratch their musical itch. For fun. "It's good to have another project to keep your musical abilities 'en fuego' when you're home," Breen explains. "For us, it's our rap group the 812 Dirty Squad. We just sit in our studio, sip Courvoisier and write hits." Breen suggests all you webheads check them out on www.myspace.com.

*"Being home is great and all, for about 2 weeks," Breen admits. "Then, you're really bored and ready to get back out there." He spends time off the road wishing he was on the road!

THROWDOWN

When we conducted this interview with Throwdown vocalist Dave Peters, he was just finishing up the recording of the band's new album, **Vendetta** (Trustkill Records). He was actually off the road, but gearing up to return. Alums of Ozzfest 2004, Throwdown mix simplistic, Neanderthal riffs with Peters' take no prisoners barks. But on the new album, they perform a few unexpected sonic twists and turns. Peters gave us the lowdown on Throwdown, off the road.



*"I hang out with my girlfriend, which means I get to see the people that I love," he philosophizes. "I see people I hate, which is my band, when I am on tour. I am totally kidding about hating my band." We got his sense of humor, but as writers and editor who've only gone on the road with bands for a few days at a time, we can see how by the end of an eight week tour, most band mates might be ready to kill each other. But we know, there is a lot of love in the TD camp.

*Eating a variety of food is hard on the road, because you are always on the go, go, go, so Peters makes up for it when he's home. "I eat a ton, because I don't eat a ton on the road. I probably eat 6 meals a day when I am home, instead of 3 on the road. There are 10 different restaurants that I miss when I am gone. I come home, and I make sure I hit all those, even if I'm home for 5 days. I have to eat at Steve's Char Burger. I gotta get smoothies at Jamba Juice," he says. Our stomachs are growling right about now.

*He abstains from music. "I try to not to listen to music and not go to shows. I avoid it like the plague, even if it's down the street from my house." While that might seem odd to the lay listener, if you think about it, when you play shows for a living, it makes sense to take a sabbatical from it from time to time to prevent burn out. Do you want to process insurance claims or clean someone's teeth on your day off? We didn't think so.

*Instead of music-related social events, Peters prefers to engage in conversation or just watch TV. Like the rest of us. Universal human activities.

*Like Emanuel's Matt Breen, waking before 2 PM is not allowed. "I sleep till 3 PM, because I can't do that on the road." Stocking up on the Zs. It's a good thing.

"It's taken us some time to grow into what we want to be as a band."

BY TOM LONG

Let's face it, when it comes to listing the booming epicenters of the hard rock universe, South Africa isn't usually among the chosen few. England? Yeah. Australia? Sure. The good ol' U.S.A.? Of course! Indeed, it seems while much of the planet around them has generated their fair share of guitar-toting talent over the last few decades, the land at the far tip of the African continent hasn't really held up their end of the bargain. But with the continued development of Johannesburg's own Seether (perhaps best known to State-side audiences for their 2004 performance of *Broken* with Evanescence's Amy Lee), all that may soon change. As this talented unit prepare to release their third album, **Karma & Effect** (which follows both the band's successful 2003 album, **Disclaimer** and their participation in that summer's *Ozzfest*), it would appear as if vocalist/guitarist Shaun Morgan, bassist Dale Stewart, guitarist Pat Callahan and drummer John Humphrey are about to take a quantum leap both in terms of their musical production and their over-all impact on the contemporary music scene.

"Believe it or not, there are a lot of bands playing in South Africa," Morgan said. "We're like this little 'island' away from the rest of the world. We have our own culture and influences, but we're also incredibly influenced by what happens in Europe and America. In

some ways we're like another state of the U.S.—one that's located 5,000 miles from your shore."

Their out-of-the-way locale allowed Morgan and Stewart to reach musical maturity at their own pace. Originally forming their rock and roll partnership in 1999 under the group name Saron Gas (before they fully understood the lethal consequences of that concoction), the pair quickly renamed their unit Seether and set out to make a mark for themselves on the busy-but-small South African music scene. By continually adding various sidemen to round out their musical venture, the duo maintained an amazingly fresh sound while attracting an ever-increasing flood of publicity throughout their homeland. By Y2K all that momentum had reached a fever pitch, one that resulted in the band recording their debut disc, **Fragile**, an album that would eventually emerge as one of the best selling rock discs ever produced by a South African band.

"We knew we had built a solid following because of the reaction we were getting at our shows," Stewart said. "But South African people are more interested in native music or in pop than in hard rock. At first, we were something of a novelty, then as more people began to catch on, the album and the live shows kind of took on a life of their own."

As things on the African sub-continent began to heat up for Seether, the band's distinctive, heart-felt hard rock sound began to trickle out to all corners of the music world. European fans were the first to recognize the band's distinctive style and Morgan's deft songwriting touch. Eventually a copy of the duo's debut disc landed on the desk of a State-side label A&R rep, and from there things quickly hit high-gear for the band. Signing their deal was just the first step in the creative process for Seether. Soon after, they found themselves in the recording studio bringing to life the introspective, highly poignant and personal tales that fill **Disclaimer**. It was on that disc that the band's heavy, chugging, yet highly melodic sound began to make a major impression on the hard rock masses—something that has been further highlighted on **Karma & Effect** where their songs glisten like true rock and roll jewels.

"The songs I write are very personal for me," Morgan said. "But I've found that a lot of other people can relate to my pain and suffering. I'm not trying to represent any grand cause or emerge as some sort of spokesman. I'm just putting across my own ideas and emotions, and if people want to listen to them, that's great. It's all some kind of therapy for everyone involved."

SEETHER

MOVING AHEAD

A black and white promotional photograph of the band Seether. The band consists of four members: a man with a beard on the far left, a man with short hair in the center, a woman with dark hair and a mustache on the right, and a man with long hair partially visible on the far right. They are all looking directly at the camera with serious expressions. The background is dark and moody, with some foliage visible.

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CORROSION OF CONFORMITY

SHAKING THINGS UP

Corrosion of Conformity's vocalist/guitarist Pepper Keenan and guitarist Woody Weatherman were slouched in overstuffed chairs in a brightly lit room above their recording studio. The pair were casually listening to playbacks of tracks from their latest album, *In the Arms of God*—their first disc in nearly five years. Rather than appearing lost in thought or deep in concentration, the ragged-looking rockers had a far-more-pressing matter on their agenda—finding mustard to smear upon the hefty deli sandwiches stretched out before them. It's late in the afternoon and the duo, along with bandmates Mike Dean (bass) and Stanton Moore (drums), hadn't eaten all day. To their way of thinking, there was time to focus on music later. Now was the time to chow down!

"Sometimes you get so caught up in what you're doing that you don't remember to eat," Keenan said as he chomped into his sandwich. "You don't even know if it's day or night. That's why we like to listen to playbacks where there are windows and we can actually see that life exists away from where we are."

Evidently, Corrosion of Conformity have hit upon just the right method for creating music. Judging by both the success of such previous discs as *Deliverance* and *Wiseblood*, during their 23 year career this heavy-handed band has continually created a sound that has catapulted them to a position of both prominence and respect within the hard rock community. And while their dark, often foreboding and ever-imposing approach has not always been geared for mass commercial acceptance, the fact is that this Southern quartet has always managed to garner their fair share of recognition.

"It's hard to believe that it's been five years since our last album," Keenan said. "The time has kind of slipped away, but we've all been busy. Now the focus is back on this band and it's time to make up for some lost time."

On *In the Arms of God*, Corrosion Of Conformity's radically off-beat and uncompromisingly unconventional lyrical and musical concepts have coalesced into a frothing, churning sea of hard rock intensity. From the power-house *Stone Breaker* to the hypnotic *Paranoid Opioid*, on their latest effort COC's musical vision has never been more brazen, bold or bizarre. Blending Sabbath-like power with scathing lyrical imagery, they have created one of the year's most powerful hard rock collections. Indeed, once again this unit has effectively unified such once-diverse styles as punk and metal into a single, seamless presentation. While elements of the band's hardcore roots remain throughout

this rough 'n ready disc, the unit has worked hard to update their style and sound to make it as contemporary as possible.

"We're a band that started out in the '80s," Keenan said. "We used to write songs that denounced Ronald Reagan. Now I've got to wonder if the kids who come to our shows even remember who Reagan was. Yeah, we wondered if time hadn't passed us by, if maybe some of the groups we had influenced hadn't gone on to steal some of our thunder. That's why we took some time off before recording this album. We wanted to erase certain things from our minds and really start fresh."

"IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS SINCE OUR LAST ALBUM."

The members of COC have survived inside their decidedly different musical universe since 1982 when Weatherman, Dean and original drummer Reed Mullin put together the first version of the band with what often seemed to be an endless stream of temporary vocalists. But by 1983 they felt ready to record their debut disc, *Eye For An Eye*, an album that caught the ear of many with its rich blend of hard-driving riffs and go-for-the-throat lyrics. Yet for all of its originality and grit, that album seemed to fall between the cracks that still existed at the time between the punk and metal audiences. But those with a sharp ear and a little imagination could sense that COC was on to something special.

By 1984, the band was on the road opening for the likes of Slayer, who recommended

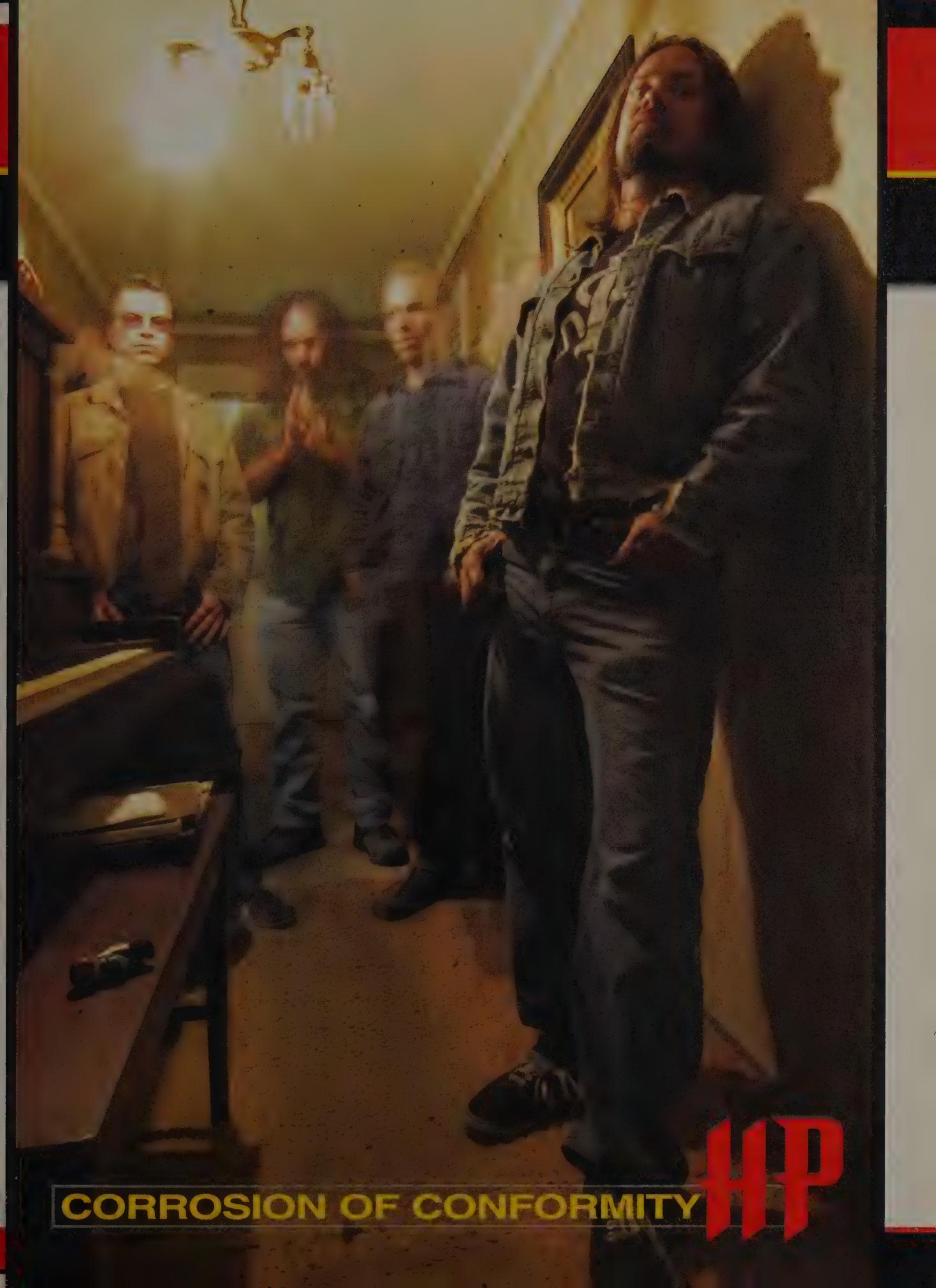
BY STEVE LEWIS

that their record label sign COC. The result of that partnership was *Animosity*, a cult favorite which once again failed to catch on with a wider audience. Frustrated but undeterred, Corrosion Of Conformity rocked on, eventually writing and recording their next album, *Technocracy*, which many rock experts hail as the first true fusion of hardcore, punk and metal styles—a sound that within three years would virtually take over the hard rock world through the efforts of other bands ranging from Faith No More and the Red Hot Chili Peppers to Soundgarden and Alice In Chains. Despite their commercial shortcomings, COC remained loyal to their style, taking long between-album breaks, but always returning to their musical roots. By 1991, the band had added Keenan to their lineup and recorded their next album, *Blind*, a disc that would finally place them on the precipice of mass acceptance.

"On *Blind* the band turned a corner," Keenan said. "It was my first time recording with the band, so there was a new element in the music. They let me sing on *Vote Like A Bullet*, and that proved to be one of the most successful songs on the album. That's why when we started working on *Deliverance* they wanted me to sing on everything. I think they liked the anger I brought to the songs—it fit right in with the group's music."

In 1994 *Deliverance* brought the band to the peak of hard rock fame and fortune, a platinum selling masterwork that is now viewed as one of that decade's most essential recordings. While subsequent discs such as 1996's *Wiseblood*, and 2000's *America's Volume Dealer* added further prestige to the band's resume, those efforts failed to match their predecessor's overt acclaim. But now with *In the Arms of God* scaling the heights of chartdom (and the band on the road with Motorhead), COC seem ready to embrace their role as grizzled hard rock veterans. In fact, after more than two decades of struggle, they're not the least bit shy about saying a little bit of fresh attention is more than welcome.

"We're really pleased with the way this record turned out," Keenan said. "But we don't want to waste anyone's time by trying to convince them of that. People will have to pick up on that for themselves. Either they're gonna like it or they're not. There are no political speeches, there's no whining and no posturing. It's all about music, so we'd rather just let the music speak for itself."



CORROSION OF CONFORMITY

Hyp

The bathroom door swung open in one of those huge, faceless, in-the-valley rehearsal studios that dot the outskirts of LA. As the members of System of a Down sat on a somewhat dilapidated, name-that-stain couch eating take-out tortillas and lazily watching a Lakers game on TV, they gazed up to see who had entered their presence. "Hey Trent," said drummer John Dolmayan matter-of-factly as the small, neatly clad dude dressed entirely in black walked by. "Hey guys," came the reply before the quixotic figure darted into a side room to once again tear through material that he and his band would be performing at the then-upcoming Coachella Festival. "He's

their multi-talented musical messiah at any given moment. It's apparently just not Reznor's style to let even his closest confidants in on his little trade "secrets". Like a four-star chef protecting his award-winning recipes, or an all-star quarterback guarding his team's playbook, Reznor seems intent on keeping his rock and roll world his own personal domain as best he can—not an easy thing to do when millions clamor for even the slightest bit of insight into your music, and read extra meaning into your every utterance.

"Music has such an interesting impact on people," Reznor said. "Sometimes a band like Kiss can come along and some up a lot of what people are feeling in a relatively simple,

straight-forward manner. They did for me when I was young. But then, sometimes a band strives for something else, and as soon as you leave the mundane behind, people try too hard to figure out what you're trying to do. Today, with the imminent

NINE INCH NAILS TOOTH & NAILS

BY PATRICK JAMES

a great guy," Dolmayan added between bites. "He doesn't say much... but then, he doesn't have to."

Ahhh, a *legendary* Trent Reznor sight-ing. It's one of those things that's been happening with increasing frequency in recent days, due both to Mr. R's appearance at Coachella and the completion of Nine Inch Nails' new disc, *With Teeth*. Still, a little familiarity in this case certainly goes a long way. After all, this is the Trent Reznor we're talking about! Let's not forget that over the last 15 years, it's been said that Reznor is a visionary. It's been said that Reznor is a genius. It's been said that Reznor is a true rock and roll Renaissance man—the figure perhaps most responsible for changing the face of the mid-'90s contemporary music landscape. It's also been said that Nine Inch Nails' inimitable leader is one of the most unpredictable figures to ever wander down the hard rock highway.

By now it's clear to everyone that Reznor knows *all* the answers...it's the questions that seem to give him the most problems. You see, in his head NIN's charismatic leader has it all figured out—he knows exactly what he wants to do with each note he writes and every word he sings. He possesses a three-dimensional imagination chock full of trend-setting musical concepts and precedent-shattering video notions. But it's the questions that others always seem to have regarding Reznor's mysterious and highly secretive creative process that often appear to throw this legendary rock and roll master into a state of total confusion.

Certainly, Reznor has learned to cope with such outside intrusions quite well during his decade-and-a-half of musical dominance. Yet it is those questions (What is he *really* trying to say in a particular song? What is the significance of *that* video image? And when will he *ever* finish work on NIN's next disc?), that have added immeasurably to the Nails' mystique over the last few years—especially when Mr. R does little or nothing to answer them.

No matter what Reznor does, no matter what he says, it always appears as if everything that surrounds NIN's musical production is cloaked in a fog of mystery and intrigue. It forces those who work at Reznor's record label, those who share his marketing strategies, and even members of his own band, to often openly wonder what it exactly is that's inspiring

arrival of NIN's eagerly-anticipated and oft-delayed *With Teeth*, the clamor surrounding Reznor's activities has only increased. The Nails' rumor mill is once again abuzz with talk concerning a variety of topics ranging from Reznor's love life to his future touring plans. Few involved are stepping forward to clear up such matters, especially not The Man himself. Whether it's simply a matter of Reznor enjoying the attitude of chaos his off-stage actions occasionally create, or if it's merely a situation where he couldn't give a rat's hinder about what anyone thinks about him, his silence has been deafening to those who live and breathe NIN.

As the months passed since the expected "due date" of the new album late last year, stories began heating up on rock hotlines, on the internet and in cyberspace. Talk indicated that Reznor's first batch of tunes for the ambitious *With Teeth* set

had left a number of label executives cold, not believing there was enough "hit potential" in the heavy, unpredictable grooves featured on many of the album's songs. When confronted, the label quickly and predictably dismisses such a notion, stating that they've *never* had any conflict with Reznor.

"We always look forward to releasing new Nine Inch Nails material," a label spokesperson said with typical care. "Any stories you've heard of conflict are certainly news to me. I don't believe that anyone would want to hinder Trent Reznor's creativity in any way."

Try or not, this certainly wouldn't be the first time Reznor ran afoul of record label personnel. It's part of Reznor lore how the then-young-and-struggling artist threatened to "retire" from the music business if his then-label didn't change virtually everything about the way they promoted such early efforts as *Pretty Hate Machine* and *Broken*. Eventually, after some bitter legal histrionics, Reznor was granted his release from that label and went on to record the historic *Downward Spiral* in 1994. Since then, his most notable work has been on 2002's *The Fragile*, along with a variety of high-profile tours. But now that appears to be changing with the release of *With Teeth*, a disc that once again seems destined to alter everyone's artistic perspectives on the bounds of rock and roll. After all, Reznor wouldn't have it any other way.

"This is a more lyric-based record than *The Fragile*," Reznor said. "When we began the recording process we did so with some very clear-cut goals, and those didn't change very much throughout our time in the studio. I really look forward to having everyone hear this music."

PHOTO: ANGELA LUBRANO

"Trent doesn't say much... but then, he doesn't have to."



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TRENT REZNOR

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VELVET REVOLVER

A REVEALING LOOK

BY DAVID VOLKER

Few rockers have garnered more media attention over the last two decades than notorious guitar master, Slash. Whether it was during his historic early '90s run with Guns N' Roses, or more recently as the fast-fingered fret master with Velvet Revolver, he has been continually hailed as one of the most talented and influential axe masters of his generation. On the flip side however, there have been times during his stint in the spotlight when he has also been regarded as one of his generation's most notorious party animals, a guy who has come close to death on occasion due to his once-out-of-control lifestyle. Yes, Slash has seen and done it all during his incredible journey to the apex of the music biz. But despite all the attention that's been focused upon him, until now Slash's early years have been long cloaked in a veil of mystery and intrigue.

Born Saul Hudson in Stoke-on-Trent, England on July 23, 1965, to a mixed race couple comprised of an English father and an African-American mother, Slash's early years were—to no one's surprise—far from typical. Music and art were always a big part of his life with his father being an art director for a major record label and his mother a clothing designer for many legendary rock performers, including David Bowie. During his formative years, he was constantly shuttled back and forth across the Atlantic due to his parent's nomadic work habits. But by the time he was 11, he found himself situated more-or-less permanently in the sunny climes of Los Angeles.

"After I started living in L.A., I still went back and forth to England a lot," Slash said. "I must have a little bit of gypsy in me because I really enjoy traveling. I was conceived in Paris, I went to school in England, and I've spent most of my life in L.A. I guess I've never really fit in wherever I've been. I've looked like I do now since I was a little kid. I was a real outcast in school. I must have gone to every school in L.A. I always had long hair, wore jeans and a T-shirt. The other parents just didn't raise their kids to look like that."

Those were rough days for young Saul. But by the time he hit his teens, he started to find his niche, hangin' out with other "social outcasts" who liked the same things he did—especially rock and roll. He listened to everything he could

get his hands on; albums by artists ranging from Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin to the Mahavishnu Orchestra and Minnie Riperton. At about the same time he started playing guitar, and as his school mates started to pick up on Slash's unique talents, he quickly found himself transformed from a borderline geek into the God Of Cool.

"I used to play guitar 12 hours a day," Slash said. "I carried it around with me wherever I went. I took it to school and ditched all my classes. I would sit up in the bleachers and play all day. That ended my whole outcast thing. For some strange reason, when I stopped trying and started playing guitar, all of a sudden I was looked at as being cool."

"Even my mom calls me Slash... unless she's mad at me."

At about the same time, one of young Mr. Hudson's friends noticed that the budding guitarists was always on the move—dashing from place to place. He quickly nicknamed his bud "Slash" and the name stuck. Soon everyone—including Saul's mom—was calling him Slash. "I never really knew why he called me that," he said. "I finally asked him a few years ago and he said, 'it's 'cause you're always in such a hurry. It was like zip, zip, zip.' Now everyone calls me that, except my grandmother who always called me Saul. My mom calls me Slash unless she's talking about me. Or when she's pissed at me she'll call me *Saul Hudson*. Slash is just one of those things—it stuck, then you're a rocker, you get a tattoo and off you go."

It wasn't *quite* that easy a transformation from class-cutting student to rock star for Slash. Before hitting it big with Guns N' Roses there were the standard years of struggle that seemingly every rocker must go through in order to "pay his dues." After a series of false starts, Slash's first real band was with future G N' R drummer Steven Adler; together the pair formed Road Crew, a hard rockin' unit that never was able to solidify their lineup. Soon after, he crossed paths with Izzy Stradlin, who handed Slash a tape of some new songs he

was working on with a vocalist named Axl Rose. Slash's first intention was to steal Axl for his own band, but it quickly became apparent that Izzy and Axl were joined at the hip. Soon Slash, Izzy, Axl and Steven had joined forces, and the rest, as they so-often say, is history.

"I had never played in a two-guitar band before," Slash said. "But I realized that this could all work out okay. We all went through some interesting times before Guns N' Roses really came together. Izzy quit a few times, Axl and I had a falling out, then Axl went off to join L.A. Guns which is where he met Duff, and then that all turned into Guns N' Roses. Simple, huh?"

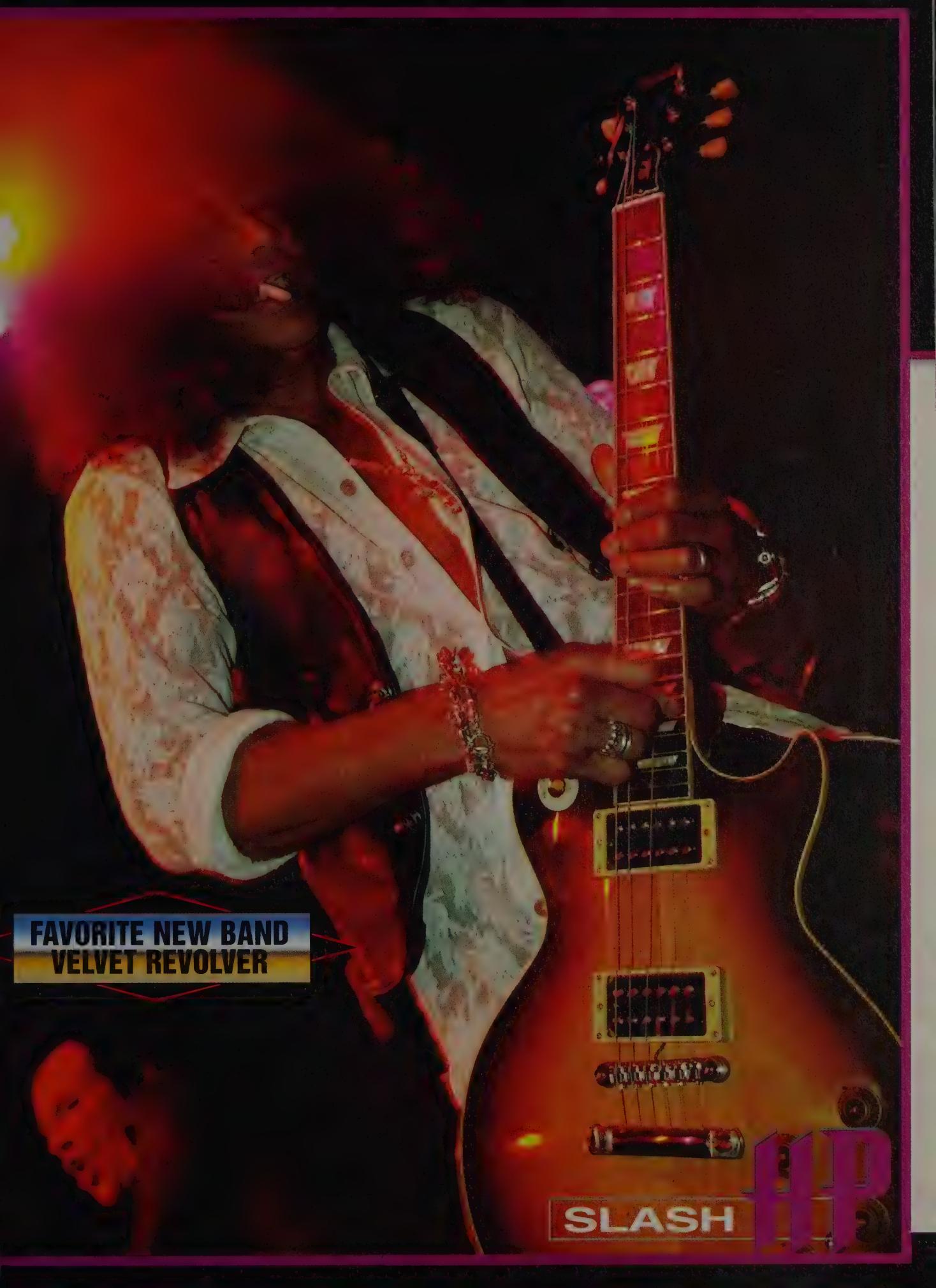
We won't spend time here relating the legendary happenings of Slash's G N' R years. Suffice it to say that for nearly a decade, before

departing that band for good in 1996, he rose to the pinnacle of fame, while suffering through the difficulties of trying to work with the tempestuous Mr.

Rose. During his first few years away from the Top Gunner's format, he spent his idle time trying to discover new musical outlets. Soon these included such outfits as the short-lived Blues Ball and the more noteworthy Slash's Snakepit—neither of which came close to enjoying either the notoriety or the success garnered by G N' R.

But by 2003 the pieces for his next project, Velvet Revolver (featuring former G N' R bassist Duff McKagan and drummer Matt Sorum along with ex-STP vocalist Scott Weiland) began to fall into place. That band's debut disc, *Contraband*, proved to be one of the most successful releases of 2004, in the process returning Slash to the pinnacle of fame and fortune he had first enjoyed with Guns N' Roses nearly 15 years earlier. Indeed, it has been a long, strange musical sojourn for Saul Hudson.

"Guns N' Roses is a big part of my history," Slash said. "But I think people quickly realize Velvet Revolver isn't Guns 'N Roses. We're not trying to recreate Guns 'N Roses or any other band. We're doing what we do with a totally unique set of individuals. This is great rock and roll music, and rock and roll is timeless. All you can do is try to make music that turns you on. Sometimes that's a lot more difficult than it may appear to be."



FAVORITE NEW BAND
VELVET REVOLVER

SLASH

10

BEST TOUR
BLACK SABBATH



BL

ACK SABBATH

Their latest summer-long *Ozzfest* run is now underway to a close. Their vocalist (Ozzy Osbourne) seems more intent on pursuing his TV career than making a new album. Their drummer (Bill Ward) doesn't know if he wants to keep on touring... if and when the opportunity is there. Their bassist (Geezer Butler) appears determined to expand the business side of his music career. So where does all of this leave Black Sabbath in 2005? For guitarist Tony Iommi it is a decidedly ticklish situation. More than anyone else in and around the Sabbath camp, his desire is to keep the band's musical light burning brightly. As he promotes the release of **DEP Sessions**, a 1996 disc he recorded with former Deep Purple vocalist/bassist Glenn Hughes that is finally seeing the light of day, it is clear that after 35 years of living and

breathing Black Sabbath, that band is never far from Iommi's thoughts. That's a fact we discovered during this recent conversation.

HP: You guys are always making new music. Is there a kind of scheduling a necessity?

TI: Not really. I think they're always a little worried that he wouldn't hold up, but he not only did, he probably was healthier and happier than I've seen him in years. Taking him off that medication has done wonders. He was physically much better, and his whole outlook was much brighter. There wasn't as much talk of retirement this time—in that past that seemed to be one of Ozzy's preoccupations. Now he was actually talking about the future—a very nice change.

HP: Speculation has been that you're gonna do a tour. Any hold?

TI: It all ties in with the appearance of the **Dep Sessions** album. That has brought me back in contact with Glenn, and we're presently working on a new album. It's all very exciting.

BLACK SABBATH

ROLLING ONCE MORE

BY P.J. MERKLE

breathing Black Sabbath, that band is never far from Iommi's thoughts. That's a fact we discovered during this recent conversation.

HP: So where does Black Sabbath go from here?

TI: I guess we'll all just have to wait and see. But as we keep touring, I am somewhat optimistic that there will be a future for Sabbath. There were times in the past when I really didn't see the light at the end of the tunnel. Ozzy didn't seem to be into it, and I just didn't know if we would ever be able to get Sabbath going again. But at the end of the last *Ozzfest*, we all had a very nice chat, and it seemed as if everyone was very happy and quite committed to continuing on in some capacity in the future.

HP: Would that possibly include a new album?

TI: I think at this point it's almost a necessity. We can't keep going out there and just play *War Pigs* and *Iron Man* every time. I'm sure those songs will still be there as a key element of our set, but they must be augmented by something new. That's the way I feel about it, and I think the rest of the guys are beginning to share my sentiment. It wouldn't take us that long to get material for a new album together. Geezer, Bill and I could go in and do the album, and then bring Ozzy in for a few days just to do his vocals. It would be just like the old days! (Laughs)

HP: What stands out in your mind from this year's *Ozzfest* run with Sabbath?

TI: I think we really played well... considering that it was hard to get a rhythm playing one night on then one night off. I would have preferred it if we could have played two or three shows in a row. I think a band builds momentum that way. It's hard to get yourself psyched up one day, let down the next, and then get psyched back up again. It's easier to just keep going.

for us because we hadn't worked together in nearly a decade, yet it seemed like we picked up where we left off before. Originally the material that came out on the **Dep Sessions** album was never intended for release. It was just us jamming and trying some things out. I had actually forgotten that the tapes even existed!

HP: So what was the basis for the **Dep Sessions** disc in the first place?

TI: A producer I know was going through a lot of my old tapes, just listening for interesting riffs and song ideas. He came across a cassette of the original sessions with Glenn, which we had done in Dep Studios in Birmingham (England). He said, 'There are some pretty good things on there, you should give it a listen.' From there, things kind of took off. Once I listened to the tapes, I realized that we should do something with them. So I called Glenn and he flew over from L.A. and we went to work. I didn't want to play with the original tapes that much, but we added a few things. But I believe that what we're working on now totally takes our music to the next level.

HP: Who else might be in your new band with Glenn?

TI: We're keeping it simple for the time being. Kenny Aronoff—who is an absolutely fantastic musician—has been working with us on drums, and it might be fun to keep it as just a trio. I've never worked in a trio format before, but with Glenn playing bass and handling the vocals, it seems to be working out that way. There will be so much room on stage that way I may end up doing somersaults.

HP: That certainly sounds like you're planning on touring.

TI: Absolutely! That is the plan at the moment. We'd like to have the album of new material completed by the end of the year, and then plan a tour for soon after that. It will be very different because I imagine we'll be playing smaller halls than I've recently been in with Sabbath, and that will be a nice change. Ideally, I will keep myself quite busy and content with this project for a while... and then we can do something new with Sabbath. That would be ideal.

Keeping Sabbath alive one way or another, is the most important thing to me.

SYSTEM OF A DOWN

BY TED LOGAN

To put it mildly, the last few months have been a busy time for the members of System of a Down. Their new disc, **Mesmerize** has met with overwhelming critical and commercial acclaim. Their world tour—which has already seen the band perform sold-out shows throughout the South Pacific—promises to last for the better part of the next two years. And their video for their disc's first video *Cigaro*, has already become an MTV staple. Yes, it's been a wild, hectic time for Serj Tankian (vocals), Daron Malakian (guitar), Shavo Odadjian (bass), and John Dolmayan (drums)—one that will only heighten when the second salvo of their two-disc onslaught, **Hypnotize**, is released in the fall. But as we learned during our recent conversation with the band, these Los Angeles-based, Armenian/American rockers wouldn't have it any other way.

HP: The response to the new album has been so positive, but do you ever get down after reading a negative review?

Serj Tankian: To be honest, I try not to read anything about this band—whether it's good or bad. What's the point? It's different when fans give you feedback because usually there's some degree of caring and understanding involved with their assessment of what you're doing. The media, on the other hand, is paid to offer opinions—and too often knowledge of the subject doesn't have anything to do with the response they offer. Unfortunately, that approach carries over from music to much more important subjects including politics.

John Dolmayan: Maybe I'm a little strange, but I like to hear negative things said about us. I usually find them kind of funny. I remember when one of the brothers in Oasis—I don't remember which one—said that we looked like a bunch of zoo keepers. I don't even know what that means, but it does give off a certain image. It made me laugh. Maybe he meant it as a compliment... I don't know.

HP: In the eyes of many, it seems as if System can do no wrong when it comes to making music. How do you react to that?

JO: I think you're wrong in making a statement like that because I believe for every person who loves us there are probably two who don't. You can't make the kind of political statements we do, and practice the kind of avant-garde musical philosophies that we do and not create some enemies.

Thankfully, those who support us tend to speak a little louder than those who do not.

ST: If anything, we've gotten a lot of crap thrown our way over the last two years because we came out very early against the administration's terrible foreign and domestic policies—and we did that before it was cool to make such statements. Of course, last year during the election season, so many others began to express similar beliefs. But there was a time back in 2003 when we felt somewhat isolated, not only within the music community but in America itself. I'm very glad that some things have changed.

HP: Do you ever fear that the band's outspoken political beliefs will usurp your musical impact?

JD: It's something we've grown to accept over the years... even if we don't particularly like it. When we first came out we were classified as an Armenian/American band. Then we were put into the New Metal classification. It seems a lot easier for some people to deal with a band like ours when they feel like they can easily classify us and categorize us. Well, we're not that easy to categorize. But it does seem as if calling us a "political band" is the current trend, and that's something that we may break away from with these albums. There is still plenty of political opinion being expressed, but there's also a great deal of humor and compassion.

ST: At one time, Rage Against the Machine was the only politically-inspired hard rock band that was being recognized by a lot of people. When they broke apart a great void was created in the music world and I think the media chose to shove us into that void. Some of the reasons for doing so are very understandable, but I know there's much more to this band than just a string of strong politically-inspired messages. Just listen to the lyrics on these new songs and you can't avoid hearing what I mean.

HP: You're currently on the road supporting the new disc. How do you feel about the new songs being incorporated into your live set?

ST: It's something that I believe we all eagerly anticipated. These songs are all close to our hearts at the moment since we've spent the last few months bringing them to life. But it's also exciting for us to have new material to play on stage. Some of the older songs—even the ones that are the most popular with the fans—can get a little tired for us after performing them hundreds of times. Having so many great new songs to choose from really invigorates us as a band.

JD: What we enjoy is discovering which of the new songs the fans best react to. There are certain songs that we feel are more album cuts, things that won't translate that well on stage. But when we play them, the reaction is sometimes overwhelming. Conversely, things that we're excited to play don't go over as well. It's a trial and error method that's always full of surprises. A few months into the tour you begin to settle down a bit and realize which songs are working best. It's a very interesting experience for us.

HP: Are there some songs you've always wanted to play live?

JD: Absolutely. Even when we had just one album out we couldn't play everything we wanted because back then we'd most often get 30 minutes on stage. By the time **Toxicity** came out, we already had a problem regarding set lengths and which songs to leave out. Now it's almost impossible for us to decide. There are so many songs that deserve to be heard. Maybe we'll just have to play a four hour set every night so that we can get in everything we want!

ST: We want to play songs on this tour that we've never played before. And we want to try and create songs on stage each night. We enjoy the concept of jamming and seeing how we can get back to where we started. That's a cool way to make sure that every show, every night is something totally unique and totally special. Our fans deserve nothing less.

WEAVING THEIR WEB

FAVORITE ALBUM
SYSTEM OF A DOWN

SYSTEM OF A DOWN

HP

JUDAS PRIEST

READY TO ROAR

BY WINSTON CUMMINGS

Judas Priest vocalist Rob Halford stood out in the bitter cold of an early New York City evening clad only in a T-shirt and jeans. As he took a much-needed break from the media hordes that had gathered to discuss the details of the band's new disc, *Angel of Retribution*, the heavily tattooed rocker didn't even seem to acknowledge the ice-generating temperatures. He contentedly puffed on a cigarette and chatted with fans who had quickly gathered to question the legendary frontman and ask for his autograph. Indeed, after being out of the Priest spotlight for more than a decade, Halford seemed to be reveling in his freshly renewed notoriety. As one young fan asked the intimidating singer what had taken him so long to return to the Priest fold, Halford could only offer a Cheshire Cat grin and say, "Sometimes I wonder about that myself."

You might think that after more than 30 years in the rock and roll game, the members of Priest would have lost a little of their metallic edge. The fact is, however, that nothing could be further from the truth. As proven throughout *Angel of Retribution*, as well as on their current world-wide tour, these legendary British Bashers remain as committed to the heavy metal cause as ever—and their fans remain just as totally committed to them! For Halford, guitarists K.K. Downing and Glenn Tipton, bassist Ian Hill and drummer Scott Travis, their latest return to the peak of the metal mountain represents more than a mere chance to once again entertain their loyal legion of followers. Rather, for the Priest Beast it stands as the ultimate sign that their unrelenting sound and leather-clad image still stands as the quintessential symbol of hard rock supremacy.

"There has always been something about Priest that has allowed us to stand out from everyone else," Halford said. "There are many other wonderful bands out there, but whether it has to do with our background, our attitude, our lifestyle or whatever, there is a sincerity to the music of Judas Priest that I rarely sense in any other band. I believe that same quality is very much present today. We're as committed to making great music as ever, and perhaps because of our time apart, I think we're a little more aware of how fortunate we are to be in a band like this."

As heard on such new tracks as *Hellrider*, *Demonizer* and *Judas Rising*, in 2005 Priest's sound remains just as heavy, just as spirited and just as committed to the metal cause as it was when earlier classic discs like *Stained Glass*, *Screaming for Vengeance* and *British Steel* rolled off the band's heavy-handed assembly line during the '80s and early '90s. While a smattering of cutting-edge new elements may have invaded the Priest sound, at its heart the contents of *Angel of Retribution* remains totally loyal to the most noble of Priest heavy metal traditions. That fact, among many others, makes Halford particularly proud.

**"The power
the five of us
have together
is incredible."**

"From the moment that we started working on this material we knew that we had to come up with songs that represented the essential elements of what Priest stands for," the vocalist explained. "This wasn't really time for grand experimentation—it was time to present a classic Priest album. Thanks to modern technology we've been able to update that sound to some extent, mostly in the production area. That way we've been able to make the guitars even heavier and the vocals even stronger."

Now the reunited members of Priest can't wait to begin showcasing their new material on the concert stage. While they've already toured together as part of last summer's historic *Ozzfest*, at that time they chose to feature no new songs, believing that their "reunion" road run should center on such classic cuts as *Breaking the Law*, *Painkiller*, *Victim of Changes* and *Living After Midnight* rather than on any unfamiliar material. But this time around, as Priest hits the tour trail to play giant arenas around the world, all such thoughts have been cast aside. Yes, the "greatest hits" will still be there, but so will a variety of never-before-played-live older

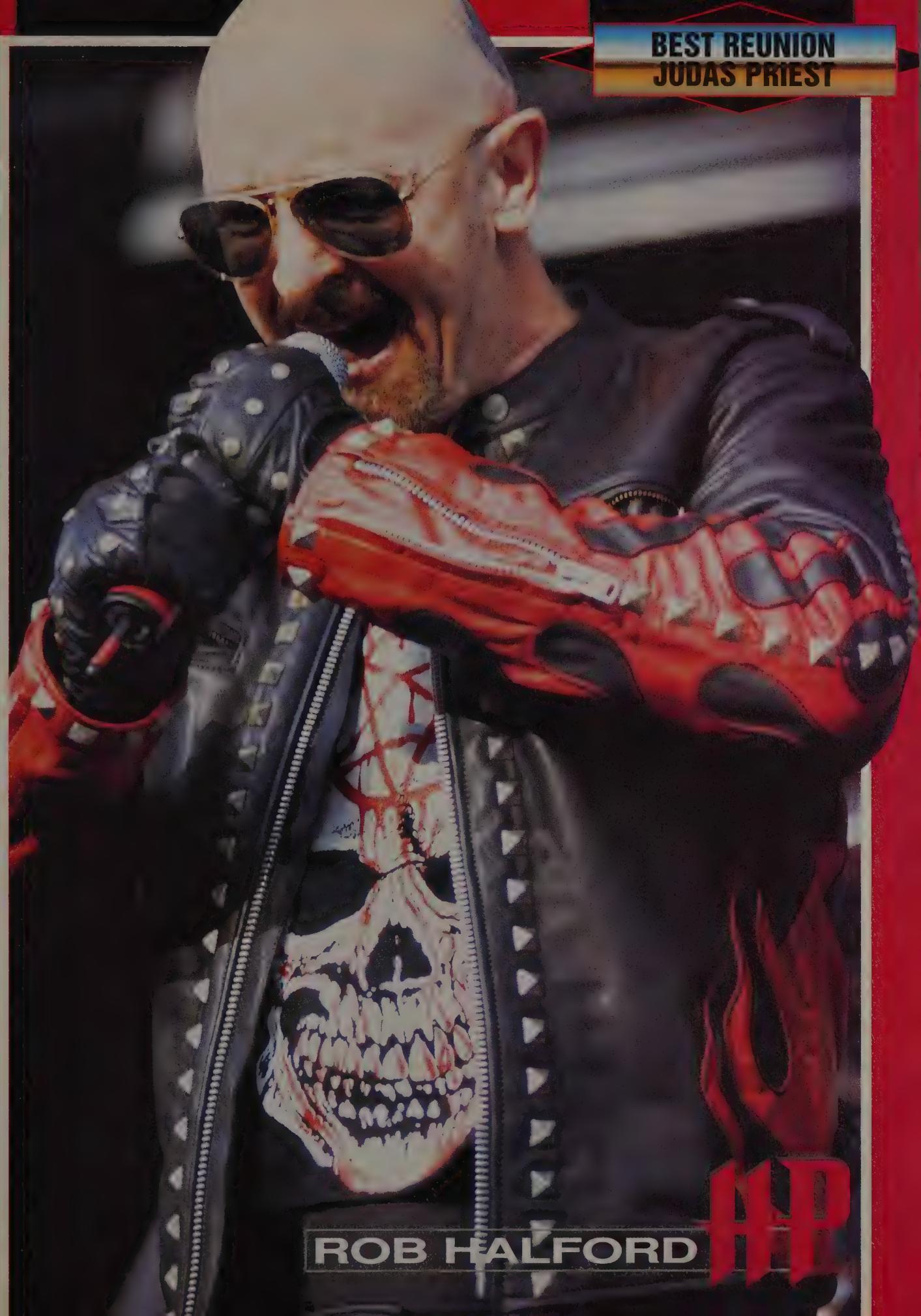
songs as well as a healthy helping of material from *Angel of Retribution*. Together, Halford believes, such a set list will comprise a Judas Priest show for the ages.

"It's going to be magical," he said. "When we did the *Ozzfest* tour last summer, it was very clear to all of us exactly what kind of show we wanted to put on. There was some degree of time limitation, and we knew that it had to be a 'Best of Priest' performance because that's what was required. Now, on our own tour, we can afford to experiment a little more. We still want to give the fans exactly what they came to hear, but we also want to give them some surprises. There are some classic Priest songs, especially from albums like *Painkiller*, that we've never performed live. Maybe we'll get the chance this time. And, yes, we will be featuring a number of tracks from the new album, and that's not because we're trying to force them on anyone. They're already classic Priest songs as far as we're concerned."

It's hard to disagree with Halford's typically bold assessment of Priest tour plans. Already demand for tickets to the group's latest road outing has reached a fever pitch, and the band's members are well prepared to entertain fans both old and new. Indeed, the concept of long-time Priest followers bringing their kids (or, dare we say, their *grandkids*) to a Priest show brings a warm smile to the band member's faces. Rather than running away from the idea that they're men well into their 50s playing music designed to be played and enjoyed by people in the teens, these timeless bashers from Birmingham, England, have embraced it.

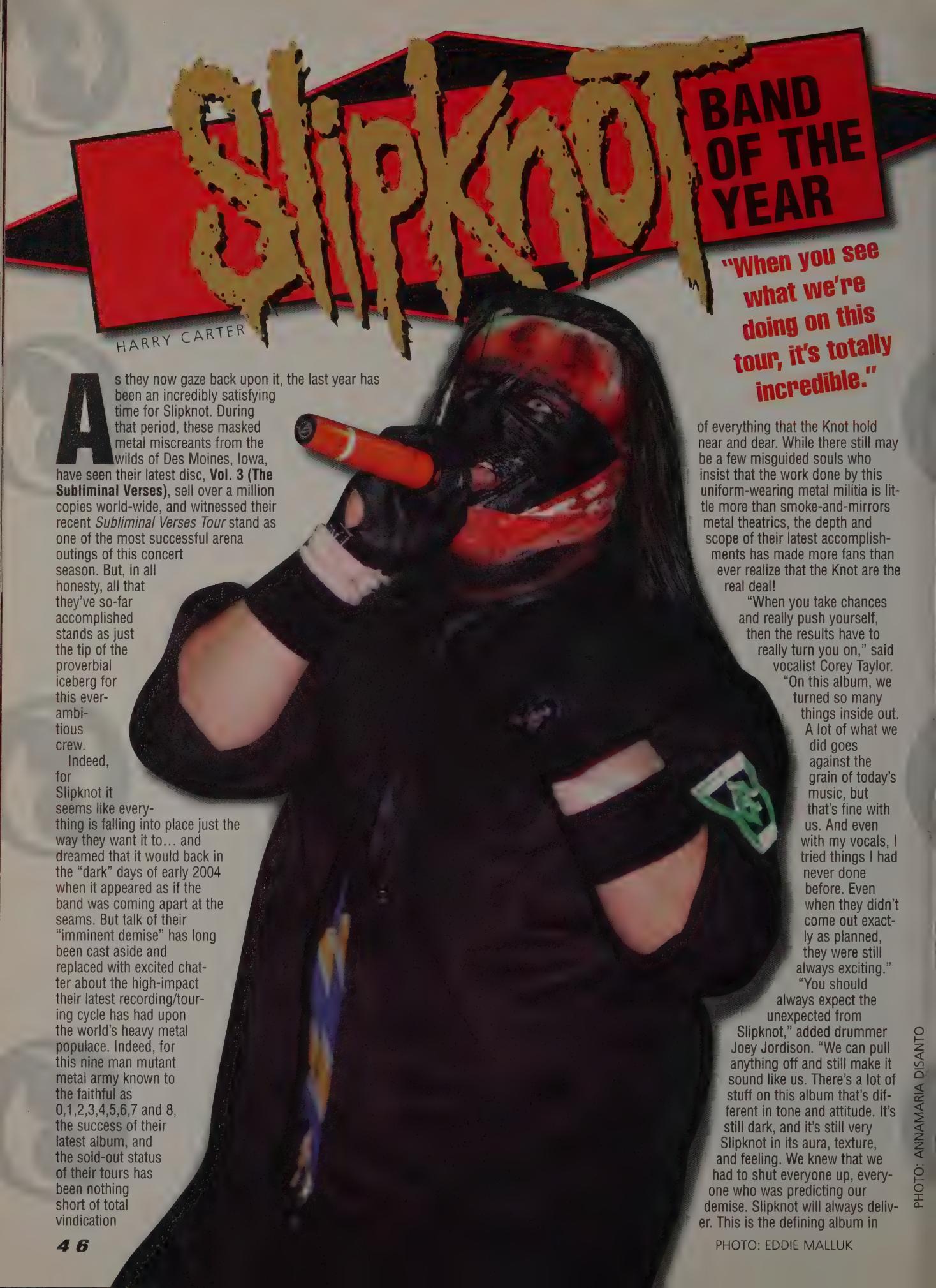
"Our fans now range in age from 15 to 50," Halford said. "And nothing could be more satisfying to us than knowing that we appeal to such a wide audience. Our older fans have already told us how much they like the new music and how they've totally gotten into it. The great thing about *Angel of Retribution* is that a lot of kids have discovered it on their own. They haven't needed their older siblings or their parents to tell them about Judas Priest. They already know. But it is incredible to think that our music now cuts across the generations. I've always believed that the music of Priest is timeless, and that fact only supports my beliefs."

BEST REUNION
JUDAS PRIEST



ROB HALFORD

HP



HARRY CARTER

As they now gaze back upon it, the last year has been an incredibly satisfying time for Slipknot. During that period, these masked metal miscreants from the wilds of Des Moines, Iowa, have seen their latest disc, *Vol. 3 (The Subliminal Verses)*, sell over a million copies world-wide, and witnessed their recent *Subliminal Verses Tour* stand as one of the most successful arena outings of this concert season. But, in all honesty, all that they've so-far accomplished stands as just the tip of the proverbial iceberg for this ever-ambitious crew.

Indeed, for Slipknot it seems like everything is falling into place just the way they want it to... and dreamed that it would back in the "dark" days of early 2004 when it appeared as if the band was coming apart at the seams. But talk of their "imminent demise" has long been cast aside and replaced with excited chatter about the high-impact their latest recording/touring cycle has had upon the world's heavy metal populace. Indeed, for this nine man mutant metal army known to the faithful as 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8, the success of their latest album, and the sold-out status of their tours has been nothing short of total vindication.

"When you see what we're doing on this tour, it's totally incredible."

of everything that the Knot hold near and dear. While there still may be a few misguided souls who insist that the work done by this uniform-wearing metal militia is little more than smoke-and-mirrors metal theatrics, the depth and scope of their latest accomplishments has made more fans than ever realize that the Knot are the real deal!

"When you take chances and really push yourself, then the results have to really turn you on," said vocalist Corey Taylor.

"On this album, we turned so many things inside out. A lot of what we did goes against the grain of today's music, but that's fine with us. And even with my vocals, I tried things I had never done before. Even when they didn't come out exactly as planned, they were still always exciting."

"You should always expect the unexpected from Slipknot," added drummer Joey Jordison. "We can pull anything off and still make it sound like us. There's a lot of stuff on this album that's different in tone and attitude. It's still dark, and it's still very Slipknot in its aura, texture, and feeling. We knew that we had to shut everyone up, everyone who was predicting our demise. Slipknot will always deliver. This is the defining album in

our career. We are able to wipe out the new metal text, and show that we are one of the finest bands on the planet."

A great deal of the recent acclaim that has come Slipknot's way has emerged at a critical juncture in this band's evolution. There's no question that despite the success they enjoyed with both their 2000 self-titled debut disc, and its 2002 follow-up, *Iowa*, by the time 2004 rolled around many within the rock world had begun to believe that the Knot were on the verge of becoming yesterday's news. A slew of successful outside projects—including Jordison's Murderdolls and the Taylor/Root unit, Stone Sour—as well as interminable internet blabber concerning the band's seemingly insurmountable internal problems, only heightened the industry-wide notion that Slipknot were slip-sliding away. But almost as quickly as such discussion reached a fever pitch, this imitable unit shut everyone up with their most powerful disc ever... and a stage show designed to make jaws drop and eyes pop.

"When you see what we're doing on this tour, it's totally incredible," Taylor said.

"It's definitely Slipknot, but taken to the next level. The energy is just incredible. There are times when it's really hot on stage—and even hotter under our masks. I almost feel like I'm going to pass out. But the energy we feel from the fans is what keeps us going... no matter what."

"Our fans are loyal and they're also in tune with what we are doing," Jordison added.

"We go out to own the stage, and we never come down below 100%. You sweat when you perform, and the suits and masks undoubtedly magnify that effect. You harness it, and then you channel it through your instrument.

Being on stage is like being in a prison. It's pain, dude. No one will ever experience it unless they go on stage. You can go on stage wearing a mask and play wearing a mask, but I'm going on stage with eight other guys wearing masks, and making sure that I am on my sound, making sure I am giving all of my energy to the crowd."

Unquestionably, it is their fans that have made Slipknot's latest resurgence so special.

With *Vol. 3* producing a string of highly acclaimed songs including *Duality* and *Vermillion*, and their tours winning over more fans than ever to the Knot cause, it seems impossible to ignore the notion that six years after first lighting up the metal world with their decidedly off-center charms, Slipknot are at the very peak of their powers. Even the somewhat jaded Jordison admits that this latest round of Slipknot-mania has ranked among the highlights of his professional career.

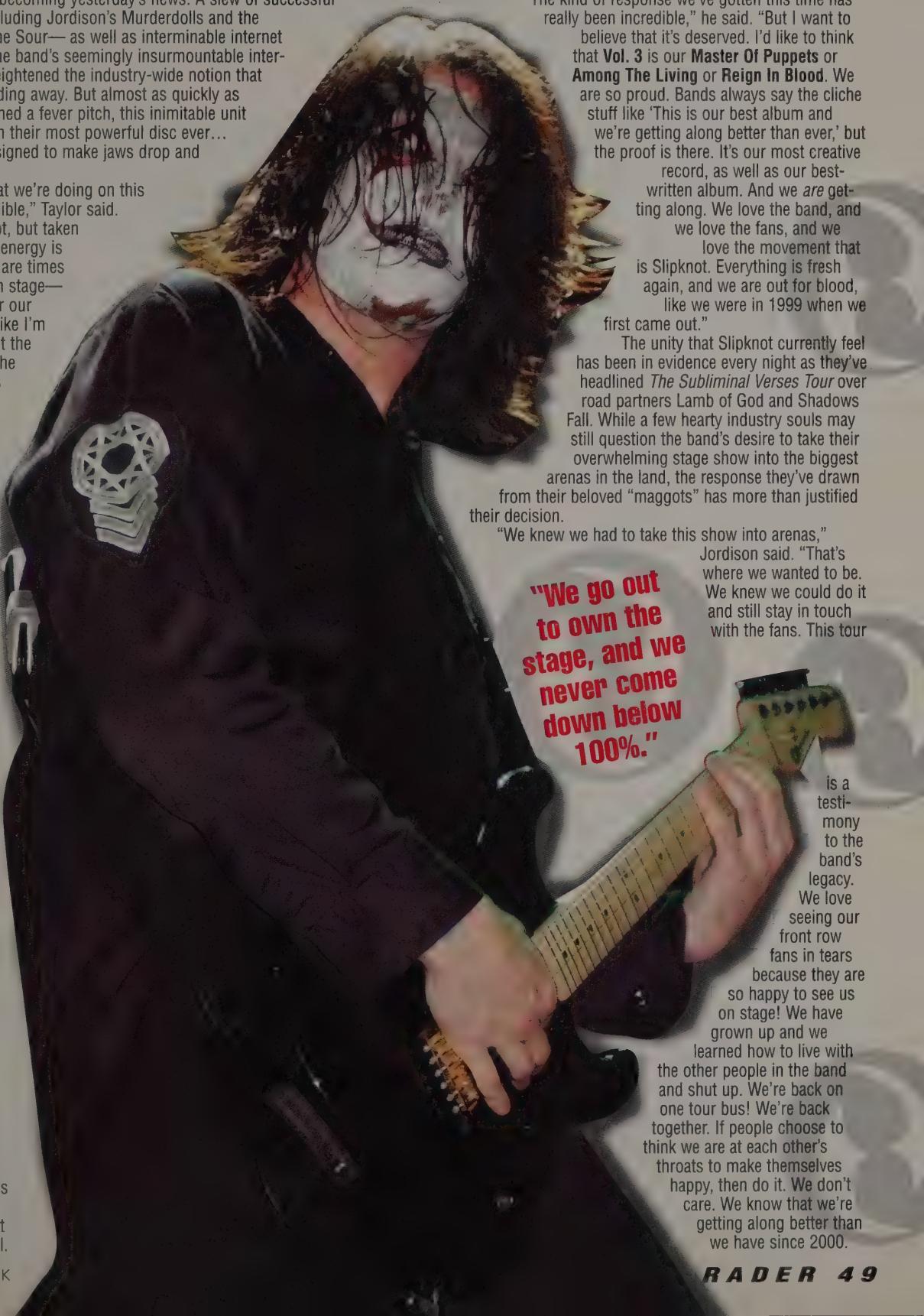
"The kind of response we've gotten this time has really been incredible," he said. "But I want to believe that it's deserved. I'd like to think that *Vol. 3* is our *Master Of Puppets* or *Among The Living* or *Reign In Blood*. We are so proud. Bands always say the cliche stuff like 'This is our best album and we're getting along better than ever,' but the proof is there. It's our most creative record, as well as our best-written album. And we are getting along. We love the band, and we love the fans, and we love the movement that is Slipknot. Everything is fresh again, and we are out for blood, like we were in 1999 when we first came out."

The unity that Slipknot currently feel has been in evidence every night as they've headlined *The Subliminal Verses Tour* over road partners Lamb of God and Shadows Fall. While a few hearty industry souls may still question the band's desire to take their overwhelming stage show into the biggest arenas in the land, the response they've drawn from their beloved "maggots" has more than justified their decision.

"We knew we had to take this show into arenas," Jordison said. "That's where we wanted to be. We knew we could do it and still stay in touch with the fans. This tour

"We go out to own the stage, and we never come down below 100%."

is a testimony to the band's legacy. We love seeing our front row fans in tears because they are so happy to see us on stage! We have grown up and we learned how to live with the other people in the band and shut up. We're back on one tour bus! We're back together. If people choose to think we are at each other's throats to make themselves happy, then do it. We don't care. We know that we're getting along better than we have since 2000.





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RE

MARILYN MANSON

BIG SCREEN AMBITIONS

BY ROY WALKER

It's been a busy time for Marilyn Manson. Following the release of his recent "best of" collection, *Lest We Forget*, this wild-eyed heavy metal mastermind has seemingly pulled out all the stops in order to further all aspects of his once-again burgeoning career. In addition to hitting the tour trail to play a string of select major market shows in order to support his "hits" set, MM has also upped the ante on his acting career by taking on a variety of roles—including one as The Queen of Hearts in the upcoming film *Living In Neon Dreams*, which is an updated adaptation of the classic tale *Alice In Wonderland*. In this role, Manson is assuming the guise of a woman, but rather than playing a "drag queen" (as he did in another movie appearance in *Party Monster*), this unconventional rocker insists that he is playing his part as strictly an "interpretive" role.

"This isn't a man playing a woman," he said. "Obviously, the Queen of Hearts is a woman. It is a challenge for me to try and get the mannerisms and the movements down so that I'm believable in the role. I'm talking to the woman in my life and asking her for some advice—especially on the basic things."

The "woman in my life" that Manson alludes to is none other than pin-up queen Dita von Teese, to whom he's scheduled to be married in Berlin later this year. Apparently the lovely Ms. von Teese has been instrumental in both helping MM understand his latest film role, and in pushing the bounds of his already-expansive artistic perspectives. That will become even more evident when he is seen on screen in his next movie role, that of a drunken, low-life in *The Heart Is Deceitful Above All Things*, a small-budget, indie film that has already won rave reviews on the "film fest" circuit. Indeed, it seems as if MM is using his varied movie appearances to distance himself as much as humanly possible from his androgynous, unpredictable and always outrageous rock and roll identity.

"There are certain roles that appeal to me," he said. "And at times they're the exact opposite of what you might think would be something I'd want to do. But that's part of the fun for me. I don't want to play Marilyn Manson in a movie. I'm looking for roles that will allow me to grow as an actor, and maybe as a person as well."

Much like one of his idols, David Bowie, it seems as if Manson's growing fascination with the motion picture industry is working hand-in-hand with his latest musical endeavors. Forget the rumors that MM is ready to hang up his rock and roll shoes as soon as his film career launches into high gear. And forget idle speculation that MM plans on cutting back on his touring schedule as his movie career expands. As he has stated over and over again, his creative passions allow him to seek continually fresh avenues of expression—while closing the doors on none of his previous pursuits.

"They're totally different sides of my personality," Manson said. "When I'm making music, that's where my focus is. But when I can get involved in a film where the character intrigues me, it allows me to do things I would never do as Marilyn

Manson. It's all really exciting for me."

There's no question that Manson enjoys his role as a true rock and roll renaissance man. Now that he's an accepted thespian, he also seems intent on soon resuming his primary role as heavy metal's Man of Mystery. Despite all that he's accomplished, this is one rocker who still gets a visceral thrill from knowing that people are talking behind his back, speculating about what his next look, his next word and his next artistic move might be. As his latest film and music efforts so aptly prove, this is clearly one of the brightest minds currently operating within the hard rock pantheon. No, Manson's cultural perspectives and points-of-interest may differ greatly from those held by mainstream American society—but that inherently holds the key to MM's on-going success.

"A lot of my recent music has to do with my take on today's culture, the way that 'dangerous art' is perceived, and the manner in which it plays a role within that culture," he said. "There has always been a type of sexually-drenched, rather depraved artistic ethic that has grown within a great society—usually when it's reaching its

artistic peak. Often, that is when outside controls start enforcing censorship regimentation's upon that society, in the process robbing it of its most imaginative and inspired minds. I think that's what is happening in our society today, and in some ways I find myself in the middle of it all."

It probably would be a major mistake to dismiss, as some cynics have done, Manson's latest creative musings—whether they be on stage, on film or in the recording studio. These efforts are clearly more than a creative mind's misguided publicity stunt or some outrageous cry for help. Indeed, it seems that the dark, often disturbing aural and visual images that characterize his latest film and musical work (including his recent single *Personal Jesus*) all fit snugly within MM's grand creative design. Oh sure, each and every one of his projects will invariably upset the mainstream, but perhaps no more than the recent rages and rants emanating from the likes of Eminem.

And yes, the steamy, sordid nature of his work is almost guaranteed to get tongues wagging from coast-to-coast. But those who approach Manson's new efforts with an open mind will note that the degree of artistic detail contained within them is nothing short of astonishing. So perhaps before any of us again begin to either condemn or condone MM's current efforts, we should take the time to fully inspect, analyze and appreciate exactly what he is creating.

"Those that are willing to take chances often have to suffer because of it," he said. "That's a theme that has come up on a number of my albums, and it's a theme in some of the movies I've recently been involved with as well. That only goes to further prove what I've been saying about oppressive forces trying to stamp out art—or at least redirect it in their own design. We're not here to follow trends, praise religion or stand by any rules of convention. We are our own trend, our own religion, our own convention. For those out there who try to make a living by criticizing art, especially my art, I can only say that I have true sympathy for them."

"My challenge is to get the mannerisms down so I'm believable in the role."

All things considered, it worked very well. This time it's all of us thinking alike and pulling in the same direction."

There's no question that Audioslave's new-found attitude has produced some stellar results. On such new songs as their hit single *Be Yourself* and

The Curse, the band has proven that fame and fortune need not lead a band down a path of self-contentment. Indeed, there is an unpredictable edge to this unit's new material that many believe was lacking from such earlier hits as *Set It Off*. Clearly this unit is still doing that "thing" that they do so well... only now they seem to be doing it better than ever. As

they continue along their ever-expanding tour schedule — which now promises to keep them busy at various ports-of-call around the globe through much of 2006 — this headline-grabbing quartet has proven time-and-time again why they've been hailed as one of this generation's most

note-worthy hard rock attractions.

"There's no question that when you spend as much time as we do playing music you develop a certain kinship that directly impacts the music you make,"

Morello said. "We've enjoyed each one of these shows, and if people think we're sounding more cohesive and powerful now than when we started out, then all we can offer is a heart-felt 'Thanks!'"

Morello's appreciative attitude has been returned in-kind by the legions of fans who have flocked to the clarion call issued by this new-age supergroup. But Audioslave's on-stage appeal stretches beyond the platinum-covered pedigree enjoyed by each band member (which stretches back to their previous units, Soundgarden and Rage Against the Machine), and it goes beyond the fact that this unit has become a media sensation thanks to such crossover hits as *Like A Stone*. Indeed, much of Audioslave's acclaim stems from the surprisingly simple fact that they can play and sing with the best of 'em — a true rarity in these soulless rock and roll times.

"I don't know if we really represent something that different," Morello said. "I like to believe

that we're holding up some of the most notable rock traditions, while in the process

adding our own twist to the proceedings."

In all honesty, the members of Audioslave haven't been surprised by the degree of fan furor their new music has created. From the moment they first entered the recording studio, each rocker was convinced that the songs they were creating were among the best of their lives. It is now abundantly clear that despite their initially bumpy path to the top this quartet has clearly not only managed to survive, but to prosper, continually delivering the "hard rockin'" goods with a style, flash and finesse that few of their contemporaries can ever even dream of matching.

"You never know how people are going to react to what you do," Morello said. "This time around everything has gone better than any of us could have hoped. It's now reached a point where there's true magic being created when we all get together."

It was an early stop on Audioslave's 2005 world tour. The band's second album, *Out of Exile*, had been released only weeks before, and as Chris Cornell (vocals), Tom Morello (guitar), Brad Wilk (drums) and Tim Commerford (bass) prepared for that evening's performance in Detroit's sold-out State Theater, a palpable aura of nervous anticipation seemed to fill their slightly undersized dressing room. It was an understandable sensation considering the fact that the group was still breaking in a number of songs from their chart-topping sophomore disc, an album that emerged two years after the arrival of their award-winning, platinum-selling, self-titled debut. But while these veteran rockers may have appeared slightly apprehensive about their impending performance, there was little question that this nervous energy would soon be put to proper use once they hit the concert stage.

"It's good to feel a little nervous and a little excited before you go out there," Wilk said. "That way you know you're ready. If you ever just start taking this for granted, that's when you better start looking for something else to do."

It certainly doesn't appear as if Audioslave will have any such problem for a long, long time to come. With their sophomore effort already a smash, and their first American road trek in over a year generating rave reviews wherever it stops along the tour trail, it is quite apparent that Audioslave are true masters of their musical domain. That's clearly a major change from when this supergroup first emerged in '02. This time around, despite having their latest disc released on a different label than their debut (for contractual reasons, their next disc reverts back to the other label), it seems as if all the drama and pathos that fueled the band's first run through the rock kingdom have been replaced by an all-for-one, and one-for-all ethic that has unified this unit into an even more potent musical force.

"We've become a true band in every sense of the word," Wilk said. "Last time, it was kind of inevitable that it would be guys from two different bands trying to make things come together smoothly.

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED
AUDIO SLAVE

PHOTO: EDDIE MALLUK

FAVORITE VIDEO
KORN



Jonathan Davis:
"We want to take
more control of every
aspect of our career."

KORN

LOSING THEIR HEAD

BY ROB ANDREWS

Over the last few months, since Brian "Head" Welch's shocking departure from Korn for "religious" reasons, just about every guitarist this side of Jimi Hendrix has seemingly been rumored to be filling that band's highly coveted six-string slot. But when you listen to the group members themselves, vocalist Jonathan Davis, guitarist James "Munky" Shaffer, bassist Fieldy and drummer David Silveria still don't seem to have a clue in regard to who might end up being their newest member. Would they like to fill their vacant guitar slot and get back to work on a new album? Sure they would. Might they consider beginning their recording sessions as a quartet and adding a new guitarist later as they prepare to hit the road? The thought has probably crossed their minds. But for the moment, despite being totally focused on the task at hand—i.e. finding Head's replacement—those in and around the Korn camp report that a bit of lingering, and understandable, malaise lingers in the air.

"No matter what anyone may be saying, they were surprised by what happened with Head," said an inside source. "There's no question about that. I mean they had been together for a dozen years—and they had known each other much longer than that. This was a family as much as it was a band. Losing any member was almost unthinkable. It won't be easy for them to move ahead... but they will."

Head's abrupt and unexpected departure isn't the first time that Korn has had to face adversity during their dozen-year run at the top of the hard rock pile. Many fans will recall a time five years ago when Munky's illness forced the band off the road for months... only to see them return with a temporary guitar "replacement" when contractual obligations forced them to do so. It may turn out to be very much the same case this time around, with "special guests" filling the band's empty position as they eventually begin work on their next album—the first that the band will totally control following the end of their previous label contract in 2004.

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anyone else's
rules."**

"It's a totally 'open' issue," our source revealed. "Just about anything could happen. I know that by the end of their last tour, they were all tired. They needed a break to reenergize themselves. But they'll use that time off well. They'll try to find a new guitarist, and they'll write a lot of music. Then they'll be ready to go again."

Indeed, the concept of "down time" has never been one particularly near and dear to the collective Korn heart. If they had their choice, this unit would probably stay on the road for 12 months a year. And if they did take a break from the tour trail, they'd probably move right into the recording studio. The fact of the matter is that "inactivity" is one of the dirtiest words in the Korn lexicon. By its very nature, it's a word that signals a lack of focus, motivation and drive. Those are qualities that this legendary So Cal hard

rock band has displayed in abundance throughout their hallowed career. But following Head's departure, Korn has apparently decided to place themselves on the temporarily "inactive" list.

As most of the band's ever-loyal fans are well aware, in addition to seeking a new member, some of that inactivity has been caused by the group's not-so-secret desire to reassess that current lot in rock and roll life. In the near-term future, this ever-clever quintet will choose to take a more direct hand in both their musical production and distribution. In the eyes of many of their closest followers, that desire was the primary motivation for the release of their recent "hits" collection—a disc that moved them ever-closer to completing their lingering contractual obligations. In fact, Davis has often expressed his desire to shake things up within the band's corporate structure, while continually expressing his dismay over the current state of the music industry.

"I am really annoyed by a lot of what I see and hear within this business," he said. "There are so many things done wrong—to the detriment of artists both old and new. I think to a certain extent it's up to bands like us to change things if we can."

So it may be a while before we hear new music from Korn. But there's no denying that when this trend-setting California-based music machine does decide to crank it up again, the rock scene will be waiting with open ears. The fact is, when Korn makes new music, the entire world listens. That's the kind of impact this unit has had upon the metal scene ever since they first emerged as a platinum-selling act back in 1994. And with each subsequent release, including their 2003 set, *Take A Look In the Mirror*, the Korn brigade have been ready-and-willing to reclaim their position as the most influential band of their era. Clearly, they have proven to be the group that's established the basic ground rules for the contemporary hard rock movement. In many ways, the non-stop success that this Bakersfield unit has enjoyed has allowed Korn to become the poster boys for hard rock success—a band in total control of their artistic environment.

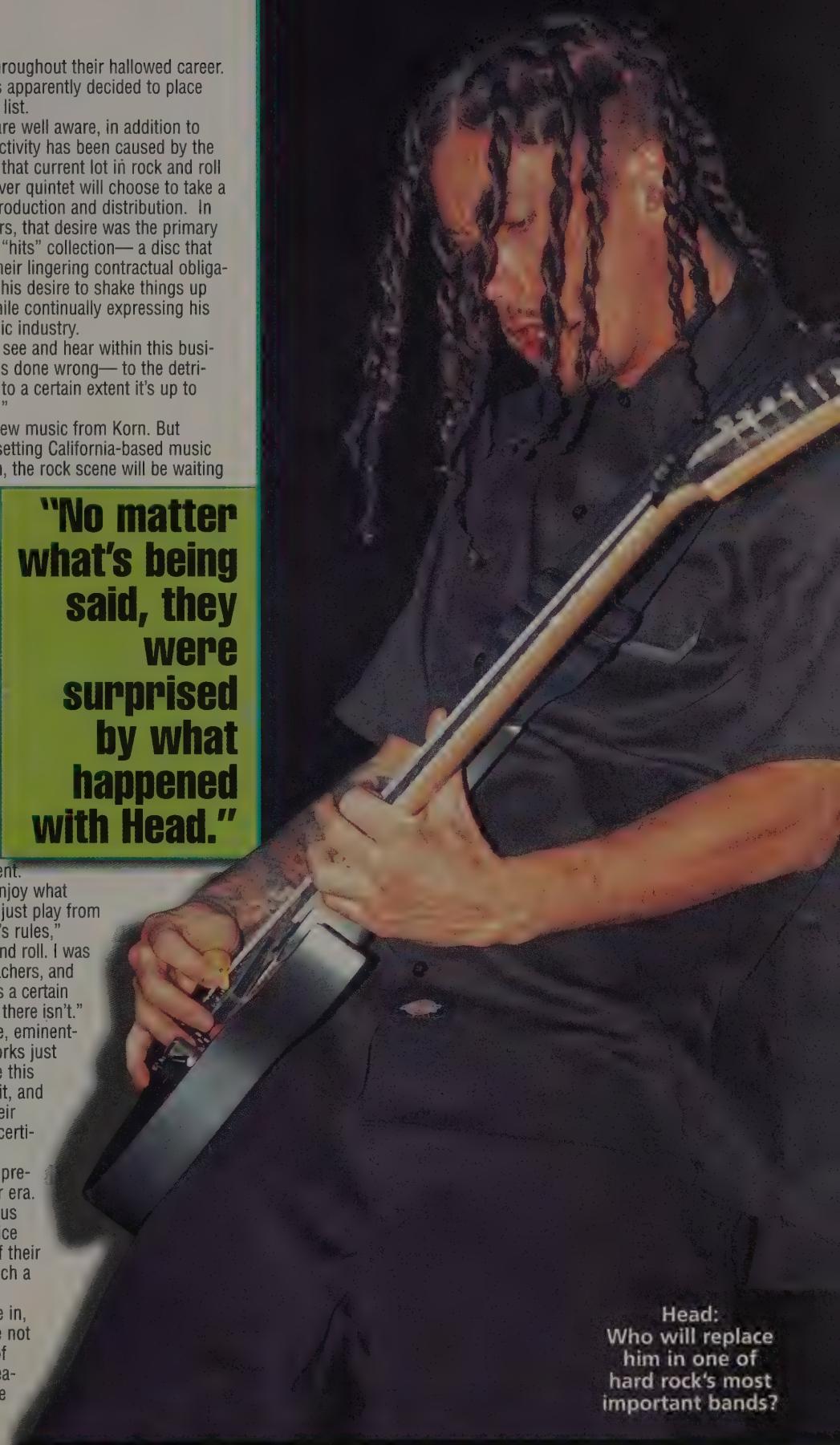
"We learned early on that the way to enjoy what you're doing, and to be successful, is to just play from your heart and to not follow anyone else's rules," Munky said. "There are no rules in rock and roll. I was always being told by friends, by guitar teachers, and by just about everyone else that there was a certain way to do things. Well, we found out that there isn't."

Apparently Korn's totally unpredictable, eminently unconventional approach to music works just fine with both the rockers who comprise this precedent-shattering, award-winning unit, and with the fans who admire them. With their *Greatest Hits* album reaching platinum certification, there's no doubt that Korn have once again proven that they rank as the premier commercial hard rock force of their era. But even more important to this ambitious unit is the fact that they've had to sacrifice none of their artistic integrity, nor any of their quirky charm, in order to succeed on such a massive level.

"We've always written what we believe in, and what we know," Munky said. "We're not writing about things that are really out of our field of understanding. One of the reasons that the fans listen to us is because they can relate to the experiences that we present in the songs."

"No matter what's being said, they were surprised by what happened with Head."

Head:
Who will replace him in one of hard rock's most important bands?



LIFE OF AGONY

BY LEE TILLINGHAST

When Life of Agony busted asunder in the late '90s, many followers of this hallowed New York-based metal unit wondered if there was any hope for an eventual reformation. They knew the wounds that existed between vocalist Keith Caputo, guitarist Joey Z., bassist Alan Robert and drummer Sal Abruscato were deep... but they hoped not fatal. Well, now in the middle of 2005, eight years after they released their last album, 1997's *Soul Searching Sun*, the hopes and prayers of those loyal fans have been answered as Life of Agony have returned to the metal scene with a new album, *Broken Valley*, that finds them tougher, rougher and more charismatic than ever.

"I may be a bit prejudiced about it, but I honestly believe this is the best work we've ever done," Caputo said. "We've been able to maintain all the raw, aggressive qualities that we've always had, but we've been able to inject some new energy as well. We've been apart for a long time, but we always shared such an incredible bond, that I'm not that surprised that we've been able to come back and make an album this good."

With their return to the rock world comes the expectations of those who believed that Life of Agony was headed towards greatness at the time of their breakup. But with *Broken Valley* tunes like *Love to Let You Down*, *Wicked Ways* and *No One Survives* picking up where their previous no-holds-barred efforts left off, it appears as if the LOA brigade is prepared to make up for lost time. This quartet is now out to prove that their raw, unrelenting, often brutal and surprisingly insightful brand of hard rock may once again show itself to be the sound of metal's future. To put it simply, while many of us may seek a life of wealth, a life of happiness or perhaps just a life of leisure, all these Big Apple rough boys want back is their Life Of Agony.

"We've heard that some people think this is gonna be a big album," Robert said. "It's still a little too early to tell. We'll have to wait and see. It would be nice if we had a commercial breakthrough after being away for so long. But we're all just happy to be back making music together."

Growing up on the mean streets of New York City, in a tough blue collar neighborhood where danger lurked around every corner and peril stood in every doorway, the members of L.O.A. developed a tough-as-nails approach to life that soon became reflected in the music they made. They named their band Life Of Agony to reflect the internal turmoil that was as much a part of their day-in, day-out existence as Big Apple pizza, and they soon set out to bring a slice of their trouble-filled lives to the hard rock world. The first segment of their career served the purpose of introducing the band to the always excitable metal underground, but despite the critical success enjoyed by their three earlier albums (1993's *River Runs Red*, 1995's *Ugly*, and the previously mentioned *SSS*), those discs left these boys far short of their avowed goals.

"It's never been easy, but it's always been interesting," Caputo explained. "We were together for seven years before the breakup, and looking back, we had some incredible experiences. I don't know if Life Of Agony is the type of band that's ever gonna be a massive commercial success, but that's really not that important. What matters is that it seems like more people than ever know who we are, and those people appreciate what we do because they know that we're keepin' it real."

Keeping it real has been the credo by which Life Of Agony has survived since the day in 1989 when Caputo first united with his cousins, Robert and Joey Z., to form L.O.A. Their intense, unforgiving and unre-



lenting approach quickly won a dedicated following on the New York club circuit—an often jaded group who would rather sit on their hands than cheer even the best of bands. Yet despite their loyal fan base, even indie record labels continued to shy away from Life Of Agony—for reasons that still remain unclear to the band's members. Finally, in 1993, a label stepped forward offering the group a chance to record their debut disc, the awesome *River Runs Red*, an effort widely acclaimed as one of that year's most uncompromisingly brutal metal presentations. In the wake of the album's release, the world of L.O.A. changed forever.

"Before our first album came out we had never really toured outside

of the New York area," Joey Z. said. "We kind of lived in a fishbowl where we were always playing in front of the converted—our friends, our family, the people who knew us for years. Once we got out there, we were exposed to an entirely new world. We went around and absorbed everything that we saw, heard and experienced. The road just makes you think differently; it allows you to focus totally on your band and your music. You

About Me, served to place Life Of Agony in the unexpected position of being a band seemingly on the brink of major commercial acceptance—whether the band members wanted it or not. Then with the appearance of *Soul Searching Sun*, everything began to change.

"I think we lost our way a little after that album came out," Caputo said. "We loved the album, but there was so much pressure on us. We just did-

"I honestly believe this is the best work we've ever done."



can open up to your experiences and let the new emotions take your music in different directions."

As soon as the band got off the road in mid-1994, they started writing the songs that were eventually going to comprise their second disc, *Ugly*. Such skull crunchers as *Lost At 22*, *I Regret* and *Let's Pretend* gave ample evidence of L.O.A.'s maturation and musical growth, delving into troubled family relationships, life on the streets and even a surprisingly cogent look at love. Their slice-of-life attitude, which was effectively counterbalanced by their amazingly emotive rendition of Simple Minds' *Don't You Forget*

to respond that well. It was at the root of the breakup."

But now after seven years apart (during which Z. scored the biggest success making two albums with Stereomud), the members of Life of Agony have apparently turned over a new leaf. They've grown up and begun to appreciate what LOA means to both them and their followers. They know they made some mistakes the first time around, but as *Broken Valley* picks up commercial steam, they insist that they won't repeat their past foibles.

"You live and learn," Caputo said. "It's all part of growing up. We're back, and we expect to stay together for a long time to come."

BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

NORMA JEAN

Atlanta band Norma Jean drummer Daniel Davison is riding shotgun in the RV. He doesn't drive the tour van, because he just got his license. Davison is 22, but he never got a license. That's because during the years that most kids that are taking driving lessons, he was busy touring. Davison and the members of Norma Jean don't lead normal lives, and their music is the most tangible proof of that fact.

Norma Jean's new opus, *O God, The Aftermath*, is an artsy manifesto. All the song titles are portmanteau words, where the end of one word is the beginning of another word, and they're fused together to form a new word. Like *Murderotica*, *Absentimental*, or *Vertebraile*. To create these words is clever, crafty, and difficult to do.

"It took a long time to string them together," says Davison. "Me, our singer Cory and guitarist Scott came up with them while we recording. We'd stay up until 5 AM, coming up with words that could be used to describe the feeling of the song, or the meaning behind it." We writers at *Hit Parader* have a hard time making a single portmanteau word, and Norma Jean have made a whopping 11 of them.

Words aren't the only thing that Norma Jean "make new" these days! Song titles aside, *O God...* is much more listenable and much less noisy than its predecessor, *Bless The Martyr And Kiss The Child*, something Davison attributes to growing up. "We don't care to be the craziest, nosiest band anymore," the drummer explains. "The structuring of the songs is more straightforward. The songs are still chaotic, but the way we put them together makes more sense. They don't drag on for 6 minutes, either. Vocally, Cory is more audible, and we have

singing parts. Some people might hate it but we like it."

Despite the fact that Norma Jean's lineup has changed more often than the wait staff at your local fast food joint, the band's chemistry has never been tighter. Davison says, "So many of our fans love our old singer, and are ready to be bummed out by whatever we put out because it's a new singer. But we're a stronger band and we're closer as friends. Also, playing with new dudes challenges you musically, and that's always a great thing."

The addition of their new singer had a lot to do with how their sound developed. "Cory wrote a lot, and his parts were different than anything the band had ever heard. We were surprised at his riff patterns, and didn't know how to do them, but it all came together!" As a result, *O God, The Aftermath* is groovier, chunkier, and more memorable.

And more complicated. Norma Jean further spikes the sonic punch, as each song has two titles, as does the album. The album's second title is *The Marvelous End Of The Exhausted Contender*, and the secondary song titles are in the album's liner notes. "There are 11 images that represent each song. We wanted everything to be tied together, so each of those images says something about a song in image form. The second song title is closely related to the song's meaning. We plan on doing a sister record in the future, but we're being vague because we don't know if we'll even get around to doing it. The follow up will coincide with this record. It'll be the same songs, in different ways, but it's hard to explain," Davison says.

Um, okay. Is that ambiguously ambitious? Absolutely. You gotta work to listen to *O God, The Aftermath*, and uncover the connections! So, get cracking!



NORMA JEAN FAST FACTS

- Cory was the singer in a band called Eso-Charis. Solid State, Norma Jean's label, re-released the Eso-Charis record a few years ago. Davison considers Eso-Charis a big influence of Norma Jean.
- Regarding the Christian issue, Davison says, "We're all Christians, and are a Christian band," the drummer says. "The Christian industry is kind'a strange, but it's a major part of why we play music. It's a dedication to God, and it's for people who aren't familiar with it. But we're not going to be cheesy about it, either."



SOILWORK FAST FACTS:

- Food is the thing that Wickers misses the most about Sweden. "You have meatballs over here, but my grandmother makes awesome Swedish home cooking, but I get to go back in June and have it," he says.
- Vocalist Bjorn "Speed" Stride looks like Smashing Pumpkins singer/guitarist Billy Corgan.
- *Stabbing The Drama* is his favorite song on the new record, because when he wrote it, he thought it was the best song on the album. "But when we recorded it, didn't turn out great," Wickers recalls. "When we laid vocals, we realized that the song has it all. Good groove, super catchy chorus."

SOILWORK

Soilwork guitarist Peter Wickers is in the middle of moving, which is quite possibly the most miserable experience a human being can endure. All your personal possessions are in boxes, your comfort zones and places of familiarity are uprooted, and you're going somewhere new. Put bluntly, moving from one building to another or one state to another isn't easy. Moving from one country to another? Now that's tough.

Wickers recently relocated to North Carolina from his native Sweden, to be with his new American bride, making Soilwork a transnational band. He's moving into a new place, and this transplanted Swede couldn't be any happier. For him, moving is a good thing.

"It's been interesting," the tall drink of water Wickers says. "I am very happy now. When I call Sweden, they tell me that they have a foot of snow, or that it's rainy. It's doesn't rain much here. You get ice storms and hurricanes, but the weather helps me in a way. Sweden's weather is the worst. It's a four month winter. The hardest part is missing my family, mom and dad and my brother, but I see them a lot every year."

Despite Wickers' relocation, Soilwork aren't going anywhere but up! Their new album, *Stabbing The Drama*, rebounds from the slump that was *Figure Number Five*. The new album was written in Sweden, and it's a seamless, well put together album. You'd never tell that Wickers moved to the U.S. and that Soilwork are now an intercontinental band unless we told you. Which we did.

"The Internet is a big help," Wickers reveals. "We have phone conferences over the Internet and we keep in touch via the Internet any-

way. The time difference is the only problem. It's 6 hours ahead over there, but we manage!"

Apparently! *Stabbing The Drama*, Soilwork's sixth album, finds the band turning the corner, and trying new things, kinda like Wickers did in his personal life. The band's trademark keyboard melodies are prevalent, but they are woven more evenly into the fabric of the band's sound, as opposed to dictating the band's sound, as they did in the past. "This album is a lot more spontaneous and it's a lot more dynamic," says the axeman. "We went back to the older Soilwork sound. There is a little bit of everything. We can please a newer crowd and we can please older fans, too. We wanted to add an atmosphere and there are a lot of keyboards, but they're more mixed in. And that's how we want to keep it. It's not in the front of the album."

Placing *Stabbing The Drama* in the band's catalogue, Wickers says, "It's the declaration of Soilwork. Everything [in life] is always over-dramatized, and we want to stand alone. We deserve a lot more recognition, because we have a unique sound." Further explaining, Wickers says, "[Singer] Bjorn [Stride] wanted to stab his mental drama with this album, and it was a great inner relief to put those experiences on paper, and he is a much happier man!"

Ultimately, Soilwork fans will be happier, too. Because the band have made the album of their career with *Stabbing The Drama*.

STILL REMAINS

"When I was writing the record, I was going through a lot of tough times and a lot of really good times with my relationships with family and friends, and with the band itself," says 22 year old Still Remains



STILL REMAINS FAST FACTS:

- Still Remains caught the attention of Roadrunner Records with their EP, *If Love Was Born To Die*, which was released via Benchmark Records in 2004.
- Miller's favorite song is *I Can Revive Him With My Own Hands*. "It's such a powerful song, it was the most powerful on the EP and we also put it on the album. It's the heaviest, and lyrically, it hits you. We love playing it live."
- Still Remains formed only three years ago, but guitarist Jordan Whelan, Roth and Miller were in another band and played shows with bassist Evan Willey's band. They recruited him to play bass for Still Remains. The rest, they say, is history.

singer TJ Miller of his band's Roadrunner Records debut, *Of Love And Lunacy*. "It's about all the things I went through, and I want this album to be something people listen to and really relate to the words,

Carnage, a Colorado based grindcore band that once termed their imitable music "Rocky Mountain Hydro Grind." But while the band's music on their new album, *Anomalies*

and be able to heal some things in their own lives."

That's the true healing power of music—something this Grand Rapids, MI-based band understands. *Of Love And Lunacy* fuses American and European styles of metal. The sing vs. scream vocal interplay is endemic to American moshcore, while the super catchy melodic choruses and keyboards are traits of Eurometal. It's almost as though they create their own brand of music: AmeriEurocore.

"Our music can be pretty brutal, but we're all a bunch of smaller dudes. We're not big, intimidating metal dudes," Miller says. "Zach [Roth], our keyboard player, is a little guy. We're more vicious than we look. I love screaming, but I love to sing, too," Miller says. "I'd even like to be in a rock band where I could do nothing but sing. But right now, with Still Remains, screaming is such a part of it. I wrote all the screaming parts on the record."

While Still Remains, like Norma Jean, also covered in this month's column, contains members who are Christians in their personal lives, they insist the band is *not* evangelical, and doesn't not use its beautifully brutal music as vehicle through which to advance their personal beliefs.

"As far as the band goes, it's one of those things where we feel God is a big part of the band and our personal lives," Miller says, choosing his words carefully. "This band refuses to label itself as a Christian band because the songs aren't really about our faith. Instead of saying we're going to preach or shove beliefs down your thought, we just want to make friends and share our music with people."

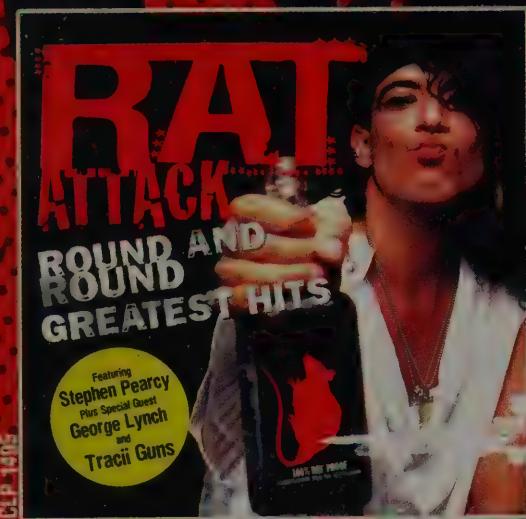
Thanks to the unforgettable choruses on *White Walls*, *The Worst Is Yet To Come*, and *I Can Revive Him With My Own Hands*, all of which will take up real estate in your brain, thanks to their catchy, memorable hooks, this three year old band will have no problem reaching people with their music.

CEPHALIC CARNAGE

"My house is both Cephalic Carnage and death metal free. I have kids running in the house all the time. I also can't curse because the kids pick it up," says Cephalic Carnage guitarist Zac. No last names used. Sorry. Their rule. Not ours. But then again, the last namelessness maintains the mystique of Cephalic

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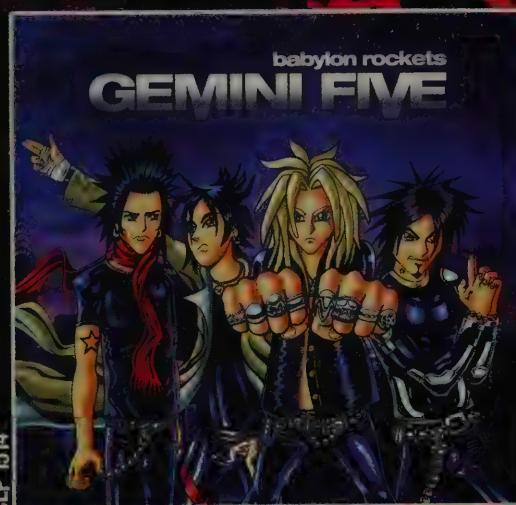


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CEPHALIC CARNAGE FAST FACTS

- Zac is a happy dad that has two kids, Evan is 3, Chloe is 5 months old. He says the Beatles are his favorite band. His wife is a total glam rocker, who loves that period of heavy metal music. His mom decorates her house with Cephalic Carnage swag, like stickers.
- Cephalic Carnage is fancy verbiage for a massive head wound.
- Zac's favorite thing about living in Colorado is the cleanliness, the decent economy, and the sunshine. The mountains are pretty rad, too. "You can go out and be away from everybody. I ran as fast as I could from my home state of Wyoming, and I love it here. It's like they knew where to put the state line. Everyone looks weatherbeaten in Wyoming. Everyone looks like they need a V8."
- Singer Leonard is a complete hockey freak.

Records), may promote the image of creatively crazed lunatics toting guitars and drumsticks, and playing their instruments at warped, dangerous speeds that could rip your eyelashes out, that mystique is now shattered. The band's image is softened by the fact that Zac is a dad who minds his ps and qs around his brood. Sound's like your dad, doesn't it?

Zac also mentions that he was just having some lunch with his wife and son, and was rushing back to his house to do our interview when he was encountered some traffic, which caused him to stress out and develop a case of road rage, which he funneled into the skeleton of what will become a new Cephalic Carnage song! That doesn't quite sound like your dad anymore, now does it? But Cephalic Carnage aren't your dad's grindcore death metal.

"We don't play fast for fast's sake or technical for technical's sake," Zac reflects. "With each record, we try to do something we didn't do the time before. We would come to practice with riffs, throw them together and it resulted in some chaotic, unstructured music, which we really liked. It

was new to us. We weren't too concerned about song structure or singability or melody. We loved *not* caring about that. But **Anomalies** is new to us, because we play a riff longer and repeat it in the song. We worked to give each song an identity. We've lost and gained fans with each record, so we're not worried about what they will think of **Anomalies**." Longtime fans will be surprised at the band's out of character flourishes, such as a successful attempt at clean singing, but the surprise will be pleasant, not horrifying.

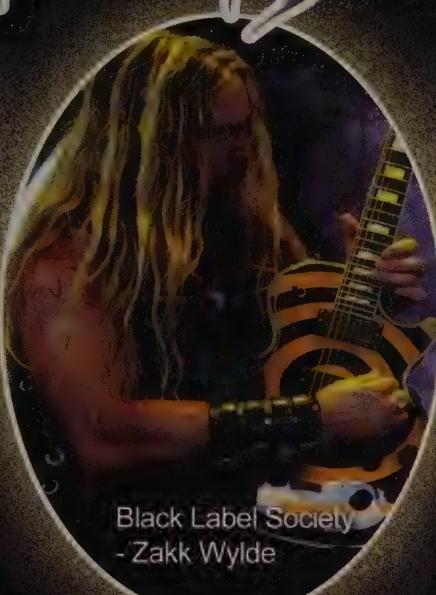
It's the intelligent, hyper creative neuroses that attracted the members to one another, and that define Cephalic Carnage as people and as musicians. Zac gives off the aura of a learned, well-read man whose also has his share of experiences in this thing called life, and that type of 'smart' is reflected in **Anomalies**. "Nothing is taboo," Zac says, summing up Cephalic's sound. "We'll play country rock riffs or a surf rock riff. It's not too serious; it's no holds barred."

Don't you wish your dad was this cool?

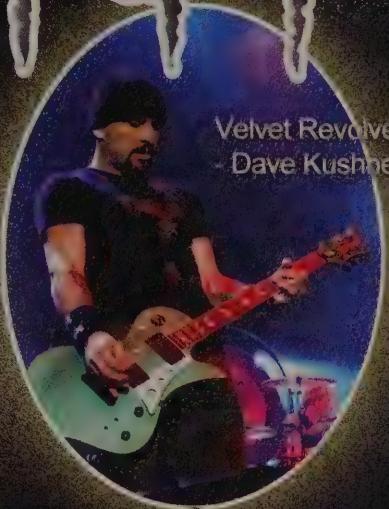
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- Dave Kushner

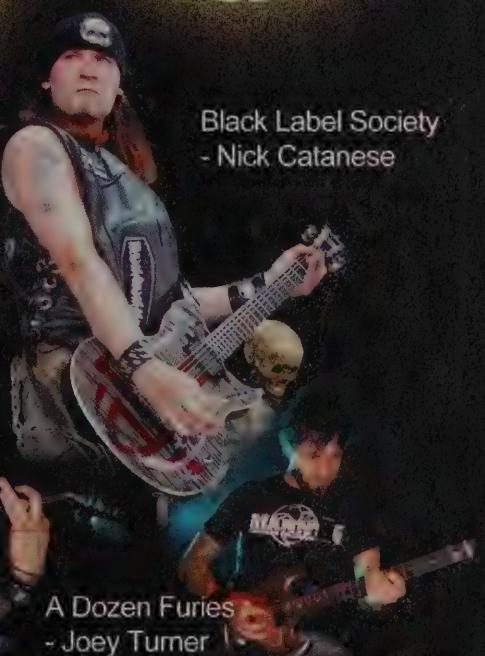


Shadows Fall
- Matt Bachard



Black Label Society
- Nick Catanese

A Dozen Furies
- Marc Serrano



A Dozen Furies
- Joey Turner

EMG Pickups wishes all our Ozzfest 2005 Artists a safe & fun tour, see you all there!



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Black Label Society - Zakk Wylde & Nick Catanese

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A Dozen Furies - Joey Turner & Marc Serrano

The Haunted - Jensen, Andres & Jonas Björler

The Black Dahlia Murder - Brian Eschbach & John Kempainen

It Dies Today - Steve Lemke, Mike Hatalak & Chris Cappelli

Soilwork - Peter Wichers • Wicked Wisdom - Pocket, Rio & Korei

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While the band Bloodsimple may be new to most followers of the rock and roll world, you can bet your bottom dollar that the members of

power of *Sell Me Out* to the pulsating energy of *Running From Nothing*, it is clear that their Garth Richardson-produced debut is about to open the eyes and ears of many within the staid confines of the metal kingdom.... and that's

just the way these guys want it. There's nothing subtle or particularly elusive about the musical musings of Bloodsimple. These guys aim for the jugular with each note they play—and they hit their intended target with unerring accuracy.

"Working with Garth was great for us because he seemed to know exactly when to step in, and when to step back," Williams said. "We came into this project with a pretty clear-cut idea of what we wanted Bloodsimple to be, and I think we achieved that with this album. We're the first band on a new label, and we want to make sure that we get everything off to a good start."

As Williams indicated, **A Cruel World** represents the initial release of Billygoat Records, the major label imprint created by Mudvayne's industrious vocalist Chad Gray. But rather than being intimidated by the notion that Gray has chosen them to carry the Billygoat flag of musical conquest, these veteran

BLOODSIMPLE

BY RICK BLASDELL

PLAYING IT SMART

this New York-based hardcore unit are far from newcomers to the contemporary music scene. With lineages that include stints in such underground notables as Visions of Disorder and Downset, vocalist Tim Williams, guitarist Mike Kennedy, bassist Kyle Sanders and drummer Chris Hamilton seem intent on utilizing their past experiences as a springboard towards creating an exciting new beginning with Bloodsimple. As proven throughout this explosive quartet's debut disc, **A Cruel World**, this is one band designed for maximum impact... and, they hope, for maximum exposure as well.

"We've done our time," Williams said with a gruff laugh. "We're not rookies at this. We've all been in bands, paid our dues, and now it's time to see if we can combine our forces and make Bloodsimple something special. The initial reaction to what we've done tells us we're headed in the right direction."

Having record **A Cruel World** in British Columbia over the second half of 2004, Bloodsimple know that they've created something quite special. From the full-on

"Having the chance to get into the studio and bring all of our ideas to life has been great for us."

rockers seem to be particularly motivated by that concept. Indeed, knowing that a star of Gray's caliber has singled out their unit for special attention has brought a knowing smile to this quartet's collective face. And sensing that destiny is finally shining upon them has allowed the members of Bloodsimple to attack their music with a new-found sense of both energy and purpose.

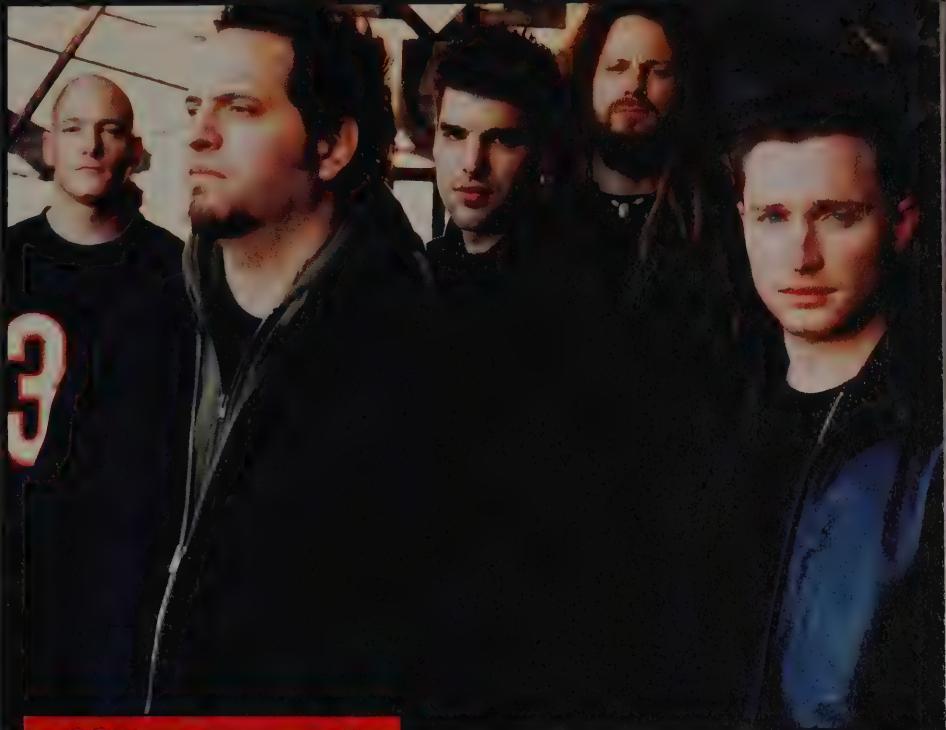
"Bloodsimple opened a show for Mudvayne last year, and I was immediately blown away," Gray said. "They had everything you look for in a band—great songs, great playing and a lot of on-stage energy. They had the audience eating out of the palm of their hand by the time they left the stage, and I know as well as anyone how tough that can be—especially when you're a young band. I figured they'd be the perfect type of group to help launch Billygoat Records, which is the fulfillment of a dream for me. I've

always wanted to do this; it's a great way for me to help friends and worthy musicians. Hopefully I can help them avoid some of the mistakes that I made early in my career."

As Gray well-knew, however, Bloodsimple has already faced their fair share of music biz trials and tribulations. Both Williams and Kennedy were members of the quasi-legendary East Coast hardcore band Vision of Disorder, while the unit's other members performed with an array of underground metal forces ranging from Skrew to Downset to Medication. But it wasn't until these four rockers joined forces in 2002, and began to carve their own unique place in the contemporary music pantheon, that the true nature of Bloodsimple began to become readily apparent.

"We knew each other for a number of years," Williams said. "Our bands played in a lot of the same places, so our paths would often cross. When the opportunity came for us all to get together in 2002, we couldn't resist the temptation. We knew the talent was here, but it took someone like Chad to be willing to take a chance on us."

Combining Gray's knowledge with the first-hand rock and roll experience this unit had already garnered, has already provided Bloodsimple with more-than-enough "insider" music biz info to last them a lifetime. Now it's time for the band to transform all that information into the kind of tour that can properly support the ear-blasting work they've created on **A Cruel World**. And despite their many motivations, Williams knows that at day's end it's gonna be up to the members of Bloodsimple themselves to



"We've all paid our dues in other bands—we're not new at this."

decide whether their band makes it... or breaks it in the music world.

"We're all about writing," the singer said. "That's what drew Mike and I together in the first place. Originally we brought in another friend of ours and cranked out a four-song demo, just to see what it would sound like and how people would react. It was only after that happened that we decided to add Chris and Kyle, and with them aboard Bloodsimple really began to take shape. Off the strength of our first few songs, we got a lot of great touring opportunities, and one of those led to Chad seeing us and asking us to be the first band he signed to Billygoat."

It has certainly been an active time for Bloodsimple. Tours opening for the likes of Biohazard, Anthrax and the aforementioned Mudvayne have already introduced this unit's rough and ready sound

to the metal masses. But the band knows it will be the rock world's reaction to the material featured on **A Cruel World** that will hopefully push everything over the top for this fearsome foursome. Rallying around Williams' explosive vocal timbre and Kennedy's rugged guitar riffs, Bloodsimple feel that they've got the goods, as well as the backing, to make a significant dent on the metal world of 2005... and beyond!

"Having the chance to get into the studio and bring all of our ideas to life has been great for us," Williams said. "All the support we've already received has been great, but now it's our turn to show that all of that encouragement has been warranted. We can't wait to get back out on the road and start playing all these new songs for people. This is one of the most exciting times of our lives, and we want to share it with as many fans as we can."



CHEVELLE

TIMES THREE

BY ROB ANDREWS

Pick your season... Chevelle doesn't care. They enjoyed their initial major chart success with their summer 2002 release, *Wonder What's Next*. They released their latest album, *This Type of Thinking (Could Do Us In)* during the fall of 2004. And now in the spring of 2005, the band has recently completed their run as headliners of MTV2's *Winterfresh SnoCore Tour*. Yup, be it winter, summer, spring or fall, the Loeffler brothers (better known to the rock and roll masses as guitarist/vocalist Pete, drummer Sam and bassist Joe) seem intent on keeping as busy as possible. Much like the motto proudly followed by the U.S. Postal Service, through the heat, through the snow, it doesn't seem to matter... Chevelle are determined to bring their high voltage sound to their rock-craving fans.

"We wanted to do this tour because at this point in music history it's very important for rock and roll to have bands that can really get out there and play," said Sam. "Over the last year, it seems like whenever music was discussed, most people seemed to think about 'wardrobe malfunctions' and lip-synching. It's up to bands like Chevelle to put a stop to that. On the *SnoCore* tour we're on the road with groups like Helmet and Crossfade, who can really do it on stage. Together we all make for a great show."

The success of the *Winterfresh SnoCore Tour* managed to kick off the 2005 rock season in high gear. Along with the aforementioned Helmet and Crossfade, Chevelle was joined on the road by such upstarts as Strata and Future Leaders of the World. The five act, four hour show thrilled those who packed the small halls across the face of North America in order to be inundated by the mega-watt riffs and balls-to-the-wall rumblings that characterized the *SnoCore* outing. But as excited as those fans may have been, the members of Chevelle seemed even more turned on by their latest touring opportunity.

"This tour started the whole year off right for us and for the fans," Pete said. "SnoCore has been great at supporting a lot of great bands over the years, and we believe that this lineup is one of the best

they've ever put together. And what could be better than the chance to rock out with your snow boots on?"

Chevelle have certainly come a long way since back in 2001, when the band's Steve Albini-produced-first-album, *Point #1*, helped introduce them to the hard rock world. Few who experienced that hard rocking yet somewhat disjointed debut could have imagined that over the next four years this ambitious, talented and determined crew would deliver a string of hits that would mark them as one of New Metal's break-out sensations. But that is exactly what's happened to the Loeffler boys. The success of their '02 sophomore disc, *Wonder What's Next*, marked this Chicago-based trio as major movers on the contemporary scene, and it whetted the appetites of millions around the globe to discover what Chevelle next had up their rock and roll sleeves. And when *This Type of Thinking (Could Do Us In)* emerged in late 2004, it managed to live up to the lofty expectations placed upon it by those both inside and outside the hard rock core.

"The success of the last album allowed a lot of 'casual' fans to get into what we were doing," Pete said. "Those people are the ones who may have heard a song on the radio, and then they bought the album. That didn't guarantee they were going to buy this one. But if they don't buy it they're really missing out. There's an edge to this music... a harder edge. There always seems to be a temptation for a band following a fairly successful album to just play it safe and water everything down too much. We wanted to make sure that didn't happen to us. We went out of our way to make sure this album was a lot more aggressive—but without sacrificing any of the melody or dynamics that we like."

Throughout *This Type of Thinking*—which has already spawned the band's massive hit *Vitamin R (Leading Us Along)*—the trio's myriad influences

(which range from avant-garde metal bands like Tool to grunge gods like Nirvana to mainstream rockers like the Rolling Stones) crash head-on with Chevelle's own artistic principles to create a totally distinctive sound. Throughout their latest offering, the group's belligerent rock attitudes are tempered by the sheer musicality of their approach, in the process creating a style quite unlike anything else on today's hard rock scene. Recorded in Los Angeles, with Michael Elvis Bakette (who engineered *Wonder What's Next*) co-producing the disc with the Chevelle boys, the album is a rip-roaring collection of from-the-gut tracks that continually threatens to blow you away with both its sonic intensity and its surprising musical dexterity.

The undeniable fact of the matter is that Chevelle's new efforts only serve to further highlight the group's quixotic nature. It's a style they perfected both in the studio and on the road as they toured in support of *Wonder What's Next*, a disc that sold more than a million copies while producing a string of radio-ready hits. Just when you thought you were settling into the raw and

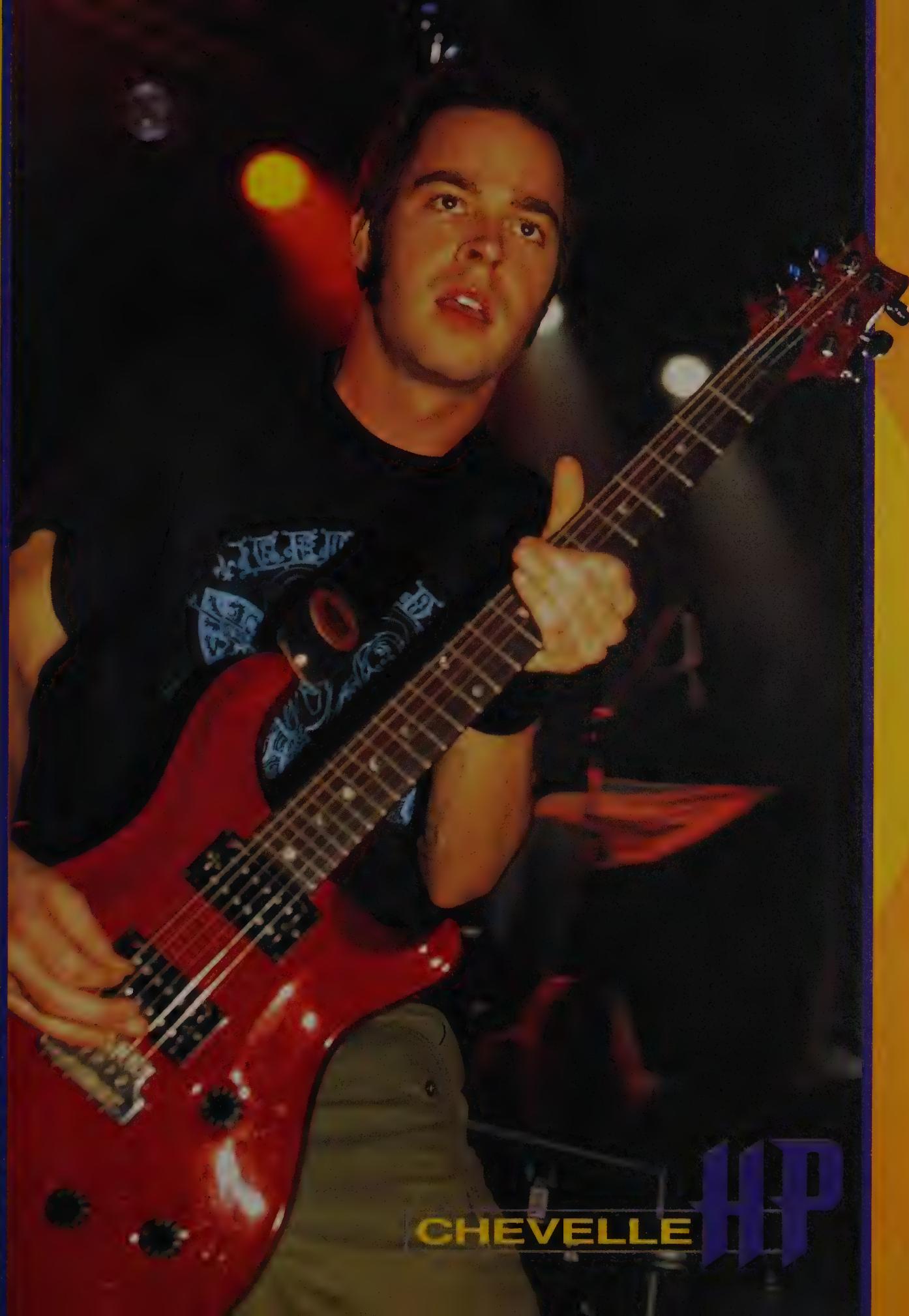
angry attitudes that predominated such tracks as *Comfortable Liar*, the band switched gears and hit you right between the eyes with *The Red*, an eminently listenable tune that emerged as a rock radio favorite. That's the approach the band has honed to cutting perfection on *This Type of Thinking*, where their latest single, *The Clincher*, aptly shows the inherent diversity of their style. But it is

only when the contents of the band's latest album are viewed as a whole can the true diversity and brilliance of Chevelle's approach be fully appreciated.

"This does represent a big step forward for us," Pete said. "Maybe it's because of our self-confidence. I can remember back a few years to when we really didn't know what to expect. But we've learned a lot since then, and enjoyed some success. We felt like we had to deliver something really special this time. When we did *This Type of Thinking*, our confidence level was really strong, and we think the results show both our maturity and our desire to just kick some serious rock and roll butt."

"Right now rock music needs bands that can get out there and play."

We felt like we had to deliver something really special this time."



CHEVELLE **HP**

IRON MAIDEN

BY PETE MORGAN

RUNNING THE MACHINE

2005 has shaped up to be a pretty exciting year for Iron Maiden. Following a relatively slow 2004—where the release of this legendary metal band's DVD collections, *The Early Years*, served as their most visible creative output—things have clearly begun to pick up in the camp of these hallowed British bashers. As rumors surrounding a new album (their first studio collection since 2003's *Dance of Death*) continue to swirl, and reviews for the group's 2005 *Ozzfest* performances begin to pour in, it's clear that Maiden Mania is sweeping the U.S.A. But, as always, the return of the Maiden Metal Machine is a world-wide phenomenon—as anyone can tell from the immediate and overwhelming response afforded the announcement of the band's European summer tour dates.

If for any reason, you don't believe us, just check out these facts: more than 50,000 tickets for a Maiden show in Gothenburg's Ullevi Stadium sold out in less than six hours, while at the same time, all of the available 22,000 tickets for the band's Helsinki show moved in less than a day. Yes, things are clearly heating up for vocalist Bruce Dickinson, bassist Steve Harris, drummer Nicko McBrain and guitarists Dave Murray, Adrian Smith and Janick Gers.

"The dedication of Maiden fans around the world never ceases to astound us."

"Sometimes it's amazing to me to see how loyal the fans stay to us," Murray said. "We can take off a year or two, and when we return they all seem even more anxious to see us. Many of them have grown up with Maiden's music over the years, and their loyalty is superlative. I imagine there can't be a greater compliment that fans can pay to a band than that."

To put all of this undying fan devotion into some kind of proper perspective, perhaps it's best just to state the rather amazing fact that Iron Maiden are on the verge of becoming one of the 100 top-selling recording artists of all-time. Mind you, that's not top 100 metal artists... or even top 100 rock and roll artists. This is a list that includes everyone from the Stones to Sinatra, the Beatles to Bing Crosby, U2 to Pavarotti. To say it is a distinct honor to be included in such high-and-mighty company would be a grand understatement. But it is a distinction that the Maiden Metal Machine have clearly earned with more than 70 million copies of such albums as **Number of the Beast**, **Powerslave** and **Killers** enthraling metal fans around the globe over the last 25 years.

"I was told about that rather recently," Murray said. "It's an incredible concept to consider—that Maiden is among the 100 top-selling recording artists in history. That covers a great deal of musical terrain, doesn't it? It would be incredible to just be among the top-100 rock artists, but this is much more exciting. It is the ultimate compliment to consider that we've now been around for 25 years, and that the fans have stayed so loyally behind us for that entire time."

Yes, it has now been 25 years since Iron Maiden first began blasting their unique brand of Anglo-metal into the ears of unsuspecting fans from London to Los Angeles. Despite a num-

ber of key roster changes (which have seen three vocalists perform with the band during various point of their reign) it is the group's current and "classic" lineup that has continually won the longest and loudest accolades from the unit's ever-loyal following. And now as Maiden gear up for their next album and tour, it only seems fitting that they celebrate their 25th year as a band with kudos coming in from all corners of the hard rock universe.

"It is quite an accomplishment," said Murray, who stands along with Harris as the only two Maiden members who've been there from the very beginning, without ever taking a break from the band's metallic mashings. "It's impossible for me to get a true grasp on the notion of us being around for 25 years. It's almost beyond comprehension. But there's obviously a reason that we've lasted so long... we're damned good at what we do!"

What Maiden do is create some of the most intense, expansive and imaginative music in the annals of metaldom. With lyrical subjects ranging from heroic battles to gothic tales, few bands in hard rock history have ever attempted to be either so provocative or proficient. While it is still too early to know much about Maiden's new album (or at least too early for the band members to reveal the intimate details), it does appear as if their upcoming collection will continue many of the most noble, time-honored Maiden musical traditions. One major change, however, may well be in the group's songwriting approach where over the years the focus has shifted from being predominantly (or almost exclusively) controlled by Harris to being much more of a one-for-all and all-for-one arrangement with everyone contributing to the creative process. Indeed, on the band's most recent

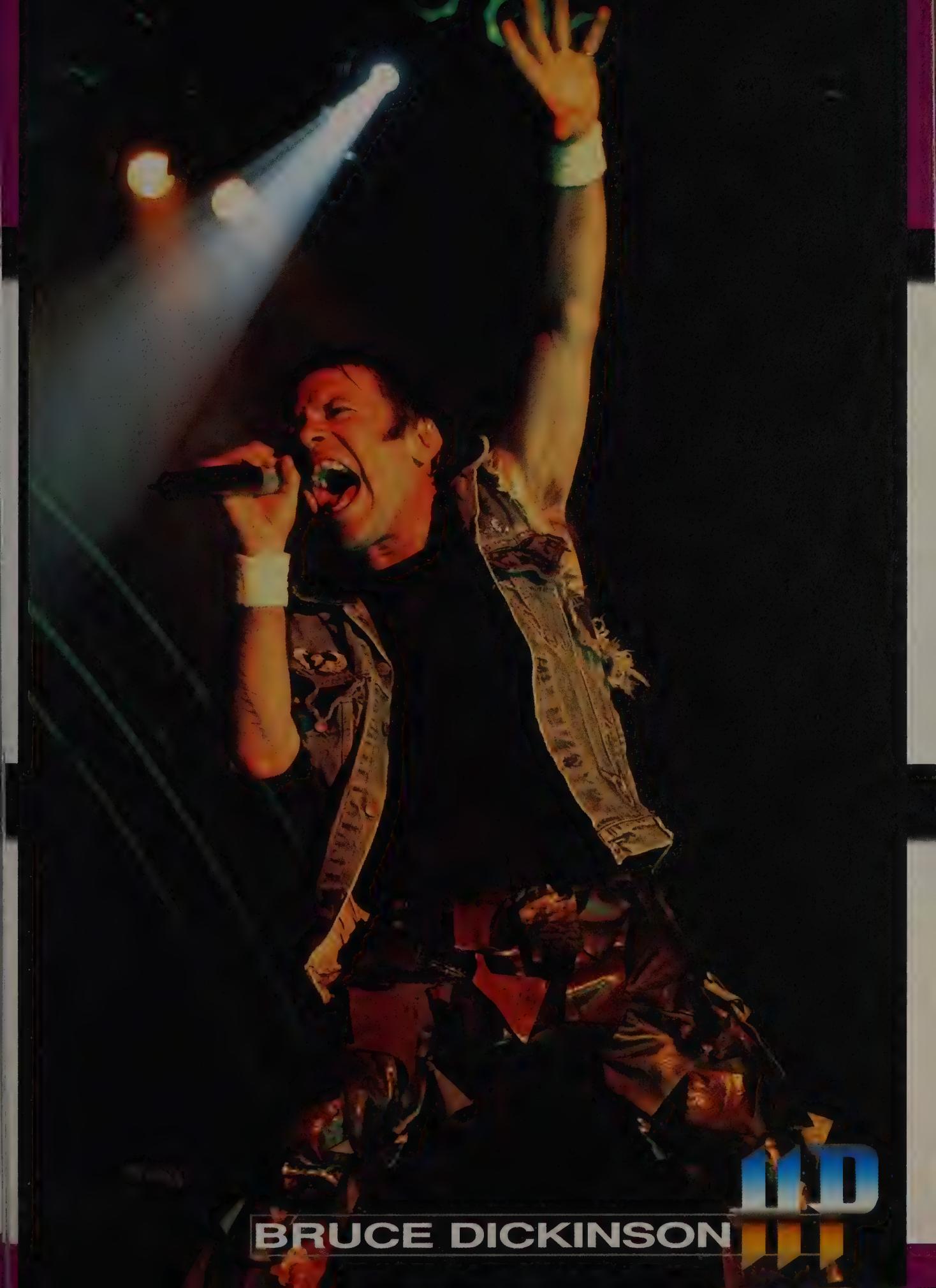
"One way or another I'm quite certain that Iron Maiden will be on the road again in America this year."

disc, **Dance of Death**, all six of the Maiden men received a writing credit on one song or another—certainly a unique happenstance in the heavy metal world.

"We've developed a great rapport with one another over the years in terms of our writing," Murray said. "We all come in with ideas, and while we still depend on Harry (Harris) for most of the material, everyone is very much involved. It's a very satisfying feeling to know that everyone has contributed to a new album."

Of course, following the release of the new album—which may occur by the late summer—a massive world tour will follow. At present, it still isn't known exactly when the North American leg of such a road excursion might begin, but it would pick up where the band left off when they spent the summer season co-headlining the 2005 version of *Ozzfest*. While Murray was still a bit hesitant when it comes to discussing the intimate details of the band's own U.S. tour, he did let on that the response the band enjoyed at *Ozzfest* has only further inspired the Maiden men when they consider their next road quest.

"That tour is something that we all found very interesting," he said. "*Ozzfest* has become such a tradition during the summer. And I know we welcomed the opportunity to take part in this one. But beyond that, it's still hard to say what lies ahead, other than to say that one way or another I'm quite certain that Iron Maiden will be on the road again in America this year."



BRUCE DICKINSON

ED
III



BY ERIC NASH

Dez Fafara learned his share of lessons when his first release with DevilDriver in 2003 failed to attain either the artistic or commercial heights he may have envisioned. So when it came time for vocalist Fafara and his bandmates—guitarists Jeff Kendrick and Mike Spreitzer, drummer John Boecklin and bassist Jon Miller—to begin work on DD's second disc, **The Fury of Our Maker's Hand**, he knew it was time to pull out all the stops. Thus the heavier, more intense and far more powerful sound that the band created this time around served to both reflect their determination to succeed and their disappointment concerning their initial step in the rock world.

"The easiest way for me to describe the sound of this album is to say that it is brutal," Fafara said. "Every song is much heavier and much faster. Nothing was held back when it came to writing and recording this album."

Recorded in Sonic Ranch Studios in El Paso, Texas, with the renowned Colin Richardson (of Machine Head and Fear Factory fame) at production helm, **The Fury of Our Maker's Hand** has already proven to be DevilDriver's magnum opus. On such tracks as

Pale Horse and *End of the Line*, Fafara and his realigned crew (original band co-founder/guitarist Evan is nowhere to be found this time around) have upped the musical ante in every imaginable manner, in the process creating one of the most compelling and continually overwhelming albums of the year.

"We're very happy with the direction we've taken with the band and the music," Fafara said. "We hope that this one reaches the audience we want and that they dig it. If they don't, I'm not sure I know what to tell 'em."

With the success of DevilDriver, Fafara has furthered his rep as one of heavy metal's most intriguing characters. As the driving rock and roll force behind '90s supergroup Coal Chamber, over most of the last decade Fafara has done much to create the musical fabric from which the entire metal empire has drawn sustenance. His passion, his power, and his decidedly off-center manner of viewing the world around him have all provided Fafara with a well-earned rep as one of hard rock's most eclectic souls.

But these days Fafara is literally and figuratively dancing to the beat of a different drummer. The vocalist has long since put aside his affiliations with Coal Chamber to focus exclu-

sively on DevilDriver, a group that in both style and sound is a far cry from anything this dark-haired frontman has ever before presented. As shown throughout DD's latest release, Fafara has created one of metal's most compelling new outfits. Mixing together classic metal influences with a not-so-healthy helping of "black" metal ideals, on **The Fury of Our Maker's Hand** Fafara and his crew have constructed a disc so heavy, so lethal so potentially overwhelming that it's cover should carry a "warning" sticker.

"The goal from the moment we started work on this album was to create something that would be embraced by fans of heavy music," Fafara said. "It wasn't about writing hit songs or selling millions of albums. It was about doing something that we all believed in and being able to reach a core audience that was starving for this kind of music. In my heart I wanted to play some brutal, extreme music that broke apart accepted bounds."

Throughout **The Fury of Our Maker's Hand** Fafara and his metal-mad unit continually deliver the heavy-handed goods with a severity and focus that borders precariously upon the dangerous. At times it seems as if the pain, power and passion housed within this band's

creative soul pours out directly through their music, in the process creating a maelstrom of heavy reactants that on occasion threaten to totally envelop the listener within their sinister intent. This is dark, scary, occasionally depressing stuff. But through its creation, this music seems to have provided Fafara with a new artistic lease on life.

"I sold my soul for my musical life, and the writing I've done for this album reflects that attitude," Fafara said. "But at the same time, I've found it all to be very liberating. This music is just so visceral that at times it overwhelms me, and I think it will have a very similar impact on just about everyone who hears it."

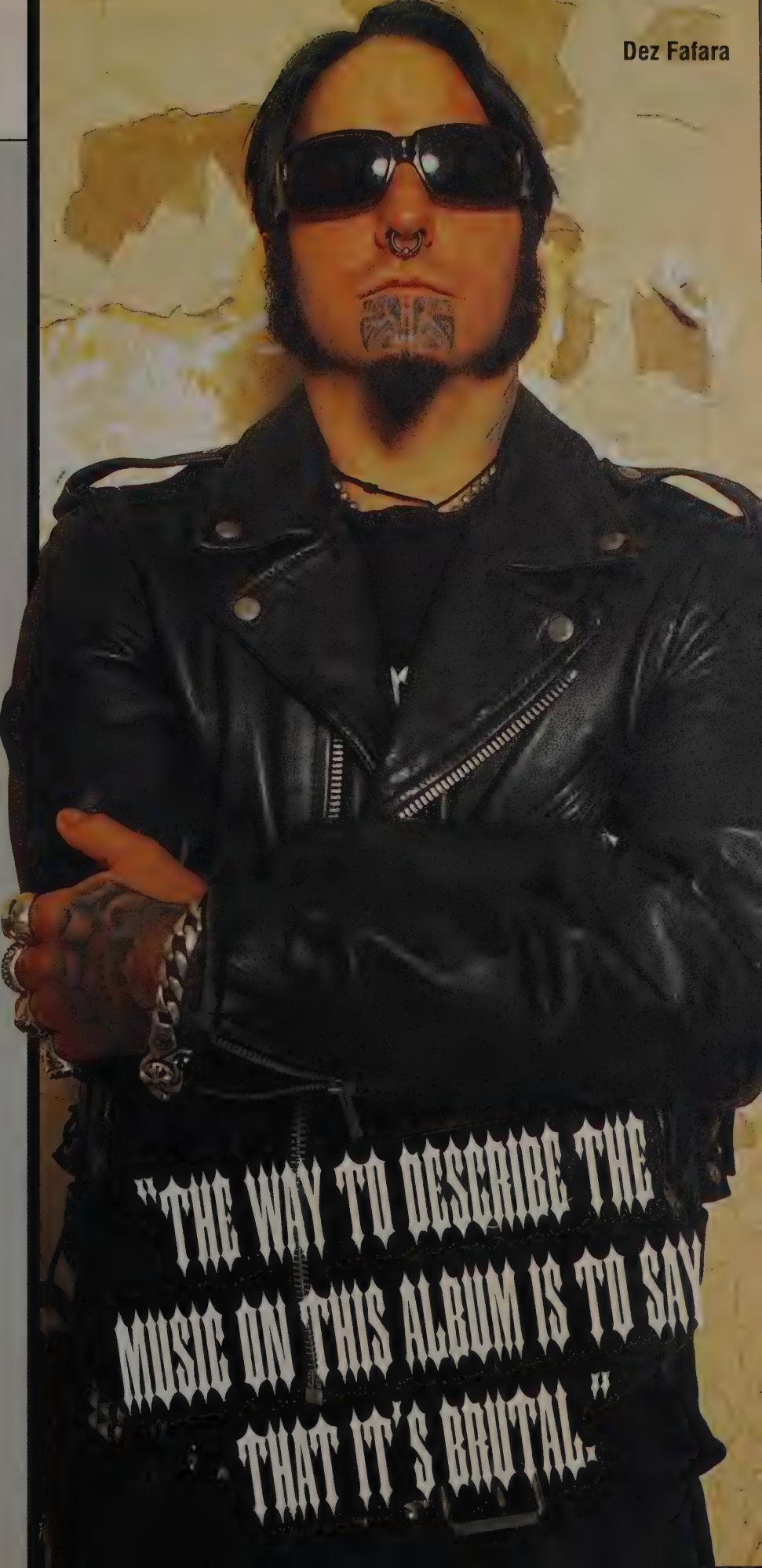
Though it's now been more than three years since he departed the Coal Chamber scene, that band's legacy still casts a pall over everything else that Fafara attempts. We all still wonder exactly how, when and why Fafara decided to make the life-changing jump from that highly successful unit to the upstart DevilDriver. It appears that the crux of this tale dates back to mid-2001 when Fafara was reaching a state of musical frustration with Coal Chamber's last disc, **Dark Days**. The vocalist had wanted to take that album in a heavier, more uncompromising musical direction, but found his plans thwarted at seemingly every turn. Then, when he went back home to California after the recording process for that disc was complete, he was contacted by some local musicians who wanted to know if he'd like to come by and jam. From that rather mundane meeting, the roots of DevilDriver were sewn.

"This band has been kind of magical from the very beginning because everyone involved knew exactly the kind of music we wanted to make," Fafara said. "There was no guessing and no fooling around. We wanted something very heavy that was on the cutting edge. We weren't looking to play it safe... and we haven't."

After conveniently "borrowing" the rest of DevilDriver's lineup from a variety of local bands, this quintet set about creating some serious music. It took the unit a better part of a full year to get their internal chemistry where they wanted it to be—and their music to sound exactly the way they desired. During that period Fafara had a very important decision to make; whether to treat DevilDriver as a "side project" to be worked in between various Coal Chamber endeavors, or to cast his lot full-time with his new music cohorts. By early 2003 that decision was made, and he hasn't looked back since. Coal Chamber was dead... long live DevilDriver!

"I wanted to be in a band that not only made incredibly heavy music, but also one that wanted to stay on the road forever," Fafara said. "This band will stay on the road until the wheels fall off of our bus. Then we'll just buy four new ones and keep right on going."

PHOTO: FRANK WHITE



FROM THE HR VAULT

Each month we bring you an incredible feature direct from the voluminous **Hit Parader** vault—an article that appeared on these hallowed pages exactly ten years ago! Without changes, editing or updates, these stories provide an amazing glimpse into this thing we call rock and roll, dealing with the form's most famous—and in some cases, infamous—stars. So direct from our AUG. 1995 issue is this "vintage" interview with the inimitable Queensryche.

It's now been three years since the release of Queensryche's last album, *Empire*. And six years have now passed since their historic opus, *Operation: Mindcrime* firmly planted these "original" Seattle rockers in hard rock's upper echelon. During that time the rock world has gone through some amazing changes, with the prancing pop pomp of the L.A. Scene being replaced by the angst-driven maelstrom of the Alternative Nation. Yet, somehow Queensryche has managed to survive.

Perhaps it is the fact that vocalist Geoff Tate, guitarists Chris DeGarmo and Michael Wilton, bassist Eddie Jackson and drummer Scott Rockenfield have never squarely fit into any rock category that has allowed them to prosper when so many of their musical contemporaries have fallen by the way-side. Or maybe their secret is that few bands enjoy the cross-over appeal of the 'Ryche among both mainstream rock enthusiasts and more artistically inclined headbangers. But whatever their trick may be, there's no denying that despite their recent low profile, few other hard rock bands can generate as much instant enthusiasm among their followers as Queensryche. Now, once again, as they prepare to release their latest effort, *Promised Land*, (on both CD-Rom and conventional CD formats) these ultimate cerebral rockers seem ready to once





again prove that non-conformity—and a great deal of talent—can be key ingredients in a long, successful run at the rock stratosphere.

"I don't think it would be fair to say that we've really ever gone out of our way to *try* to be different," DeGarmo said. "When we were coming up in Seattle in the early '80s, there were very few bands there to force us to compete or fit in. It's obviously a lot different there now. But when you come along in a musical environment like that you don't feel the pressure to rush yourself or to compromise. That's why we were able to develop a style that's very much our own."

With Tate's operatic warblings leading the way, and the band's double-barreled guitar attack adding the necessary punch, Queensryche's style has indeed set musical precedents that few—if any—other bands have been able to match. There is a unique set of musical reactants at work in any composition this band constructs, and on their new album it is more than apparent that their lengthy hiatus was put to good use; never has the band's sound been sharper, their songs more focused and their approach more volatile. And by employing the latest in CD-Rom interactive technology, the band has pioneered a multi-dimensional format that allows their fans to actually take part in the album's creative process. At a time when hard rock is going through some major transitions, almost begging for a band to step forth to provide leadership and direction, Queensryche show that they may very well be among the contenders for such a position—whether they want it or not.

"We've never been a very high-profile band," DeGarmo explained. "We've never shied away from publicity or doing what was in the band's best interest. But we're not the kind of band that does outrageous things to draw attention towards ourselves, either. I like to think that the fans have always responded more to our music than to us as people, which is the healthy way of doing things. We've been doing this for a long time now, so I don't suddenly see us becoming bigger than before. But we're very comfortable with where Queensryche is at the moment."

During their decade-long ride to the top, Queensryche have certainly experienced their fair share of ups and downs. Starting life on a small independent label, the band was among the first American hard rock groups to gain major label status via the "indie" route. By the time their first albums were released, the band was already being recognized as one of metal's most gifted and adventurous units. But it wasn't until the release of **Mindcrime** that Queensryche broke through commercial barriers to gain a foothold among rock's elite. Their following tour—during which they opened many shows for Metallica—brought even more

attention the group's way, and by the time **Empire** hit the record stores in 1991, Queensryche were bona fide superstars. Thanks in no small part to the incredible success of the single *Without You* the 'Ryche emerged as "Band Of The Year" in many fan and critic's polls, and their first headlining arena tour packed halls around the world. Then for the next three years...nothing.

Rumors filled the rock press about possible internal difficulties—of how Tate may be suffering from "writer's block"; how DeGarmo was suffering from some rare illness. But, thankfully, those tales proved to be uniformly false. The delay in recording was a mere case of Queensryche being Queensryche—a band in a near-constant struggle with themselves to create the "perfect" rock album and to pioneer the utilization of exciting new technology. For this band, the creation of music is rarely a joyous experience. In fact, those who have been fortunate to spend time with the band in the recording studio would equate their musical production with the labors of childbirth. To put it simply, for Queensryche, nothing *ever* comes easy.

"I don't know if we'd want it to be easy," DeGarmo said. "I think that if a song or album or creating an entire interactive CD-Rom, ever came too easy to us we'd question it. There is always a degree of soul-searching, of struggling, to make great music. I don't think we stand alone in that discovery. Could we probably release albums at a faster pace? Yeah, I guess we could. But the question becomes if we would find them as satisfying, and the fans would find them as good."

Nobody can question the blood, sweat and tears that Queensryche have poured into their latest effort. From first cut to last it may well stand as their most adventurous effort yet. While some may have expected the band to fall upon the proven "formula" of providing their fans with a heady mix of power rockers and heavy ballads, here the band has turned that formula inside out, tearing asunder those expectations and emerging with an album that is fresh and vital while remaining inherently true to Queensryche's long-established musical ideals. While some fans may revel in the CD-Rom format (which will provide special interviews and video snippets in addition to the music at a price of around \$40), others with a less expansive budget will still revel in the brilliance of the group's ever-complex sound. Such efforts—and such results—don't come easy.

"We spend a great deal of time in the studio," DeGarmo said. "We've worked with the same producer on the last few albums, and he understands us and we understand him. We all knew that we wanted to grow, to take some chances this time, but we also wanted to remain who we were. We fought long and hard to achieve whatever status we have—you just don't throw that away because you feel like it."

LYRICALLY SPEAKING

the story behind the song

CARNIVAL OF SOULS GREY

Since they won *Hit Parader's Reality HP* contest back in 2004, Carnival of Souls have been steadfastly working on landing themselves a major label record deal. They've had a number of big-time companies come sniffing, and some of the most prominent forces in the music biz have heard their songs and reacted favorably. But these New York natives are waiting for just the right deal to come along—one from a company that knows it needs a top-notch heavy metal contingent... and just as importantly, knows what to do with such a band once they get 'em! For guitarist Rob "The Machine" DeForge, vocalist Lee Cee, bassist Gene Hunter, vocalist Damian and drummer Bobby Rock, playing the rock and roll "game" has proven to be both exciting and exasperating, but these guys sense that the end of their quest may finally be at hand.

"Being patient isn't easy," C.O.S. said. "Sometimes all you want is the chance to play. We're a band that lives to make music. We want to go in the studio and record new music, and we *really* want to go on stage and play! We've already performed from New York to L.A., so sitting around waiting for a label to give you the 'thumb's up' can really test you. But we sense that things are beginning to swing our way. We're getting some great response from people within the industry, and from the fans as well. They both seem to understand what we're doing."

For the uninitiated, what Carnival of Souls is doing is creating a brand of vintage heavy metal that owes much to the likes of Maiden, Priest and Queensryche—but they're doing it all with a decidedly 21st Century attitude. The results of such an approach can be heard throughout their song and video

continued on page 78



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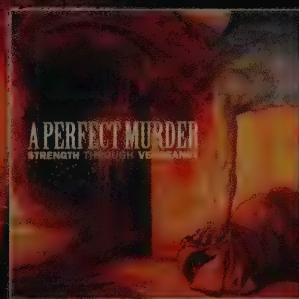
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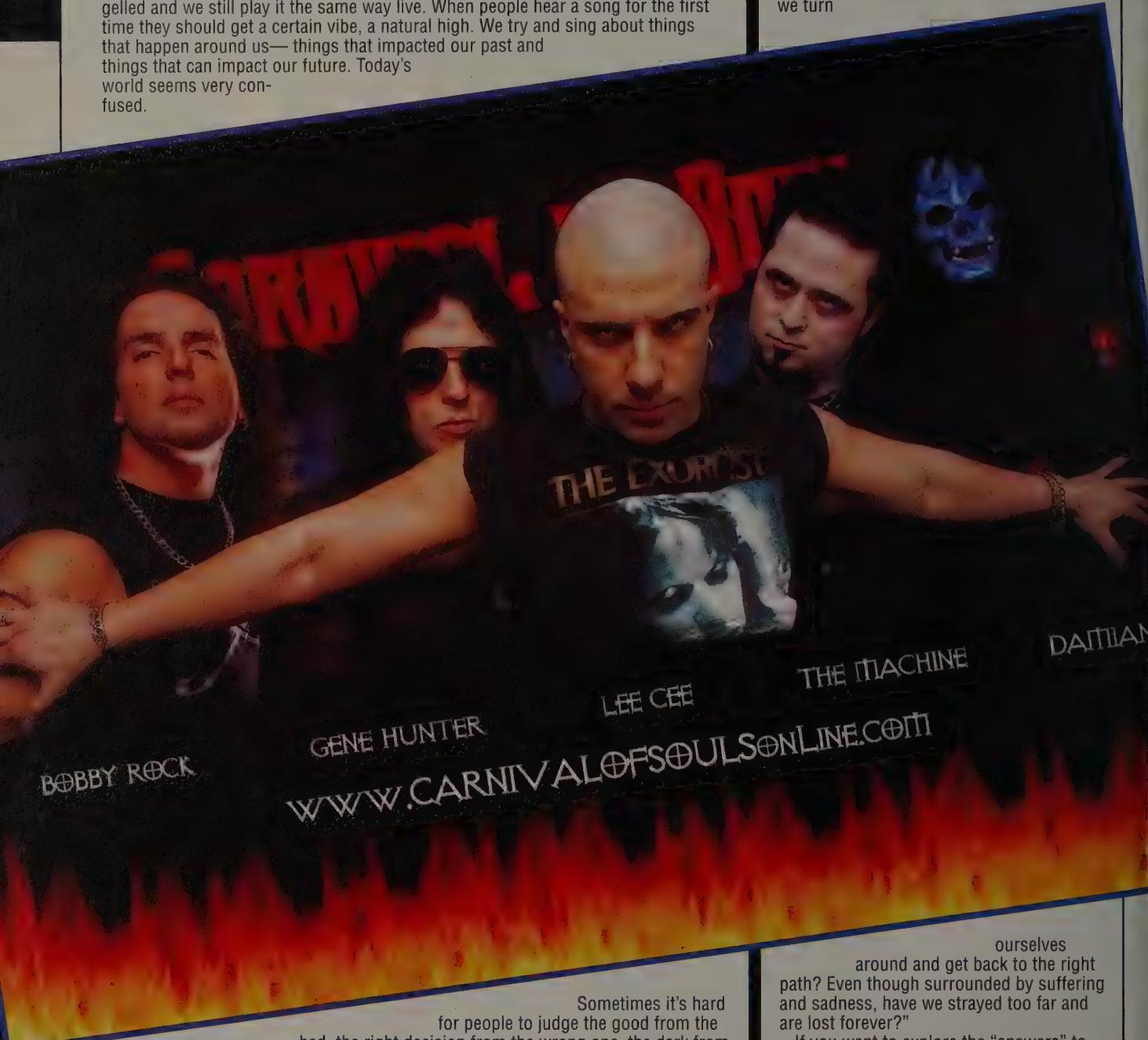
LYRICALLY SPEAKING

catalog, some of which can be sampled at the band's web site, www.CarnivalofSoulsonLine.com.

Perhaps the most noteworthy of these songs is *Grey*, a radio ready tune that sticks to your ribs like week-old tar paper, while sacrificing none of COS's hard rocking credibility. Hunter, who serves as the band's principle song writer, explains the essence of the song.

"When we first went into the studio to jam on *Grey* the energy in the room came together instantly and it felt right," he said. "The band's first attempt at the song gelled and we still play it the same way live. When people hear a song for the first time they should get a certain vibe, a natural high. We try and sing about things that happen around us—things that impacted our past and things that can impact our future. Today's world seems very confused."

gin which they can easily turn to the dark side if something tempts them. This grey area also holds up in politics in every country. If you open Pandora's Box, you'll have to pay the consequences. With the song *Grey* we are singing about walking this fine line, caught in this grey area, questioning ourselves. Can we turn



Sometimes it's hard for people to judge the good from the bad, the right decision from the wrong one, the dark from the light. We sometimes teeter back and forth walking this fine 'grey' line where everything is in between and if you stray just a little, rest assured, evil has a way of pulling you in."

"Even in some of our favorite movies (*The Crow*, *Star Wars*) the heroes all seem to be walking this fine line between good and evil, always staying in the grey mar-

ourselves around and get back to the right path? Even though surrounded by suffering and sadness, have we strayed too far and are lost forever?"

If you want to explore the "answers" to such pertinent questions, make sure to check out *Grey*, and also make sure to keep an eye out for Carnival of Souls as their career starts to really heat up in the weeks and months to come.

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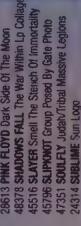
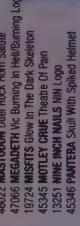
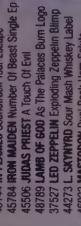
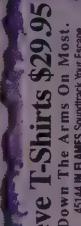
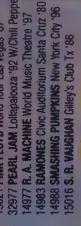
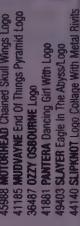
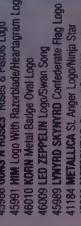
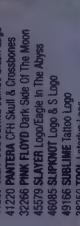
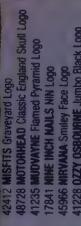
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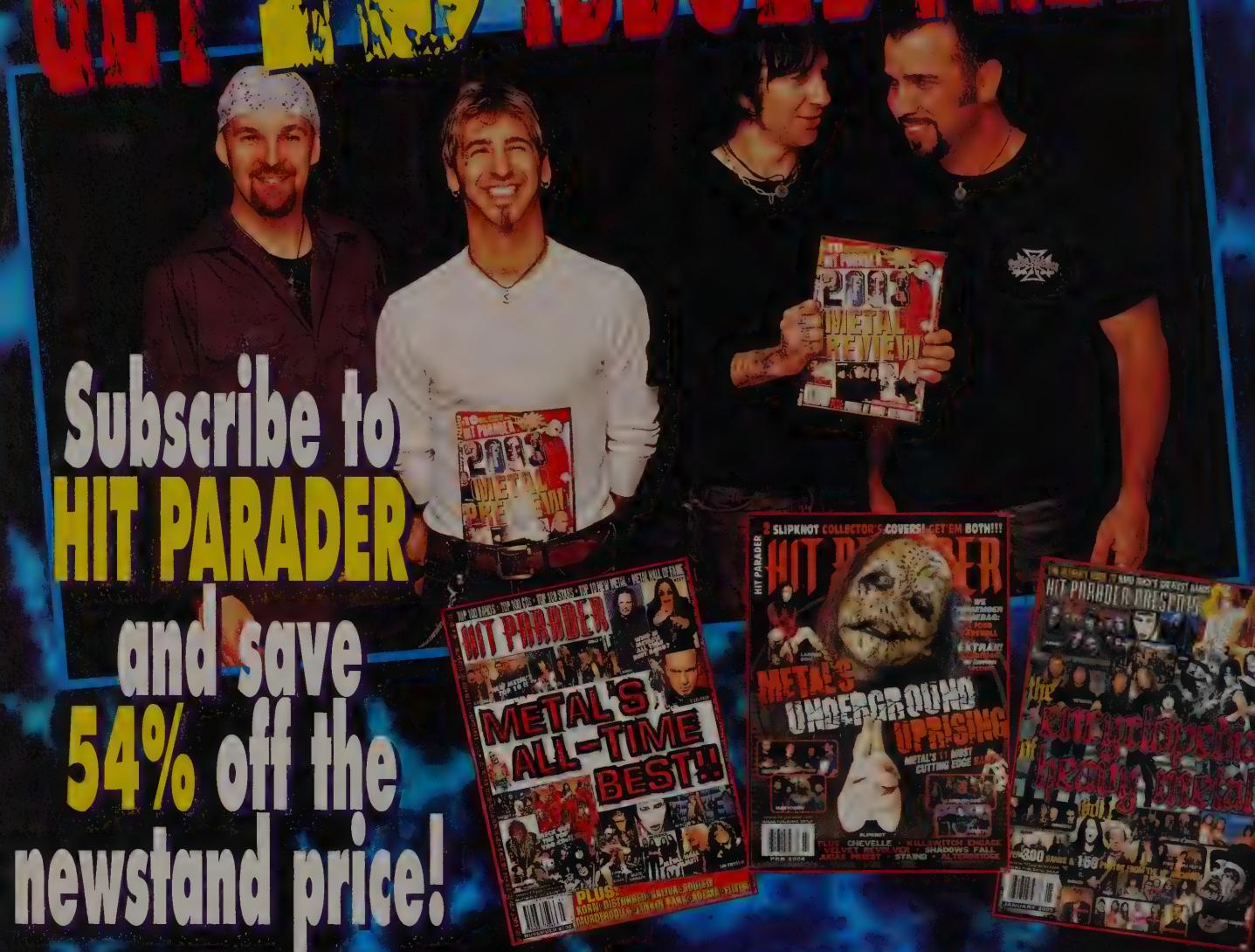
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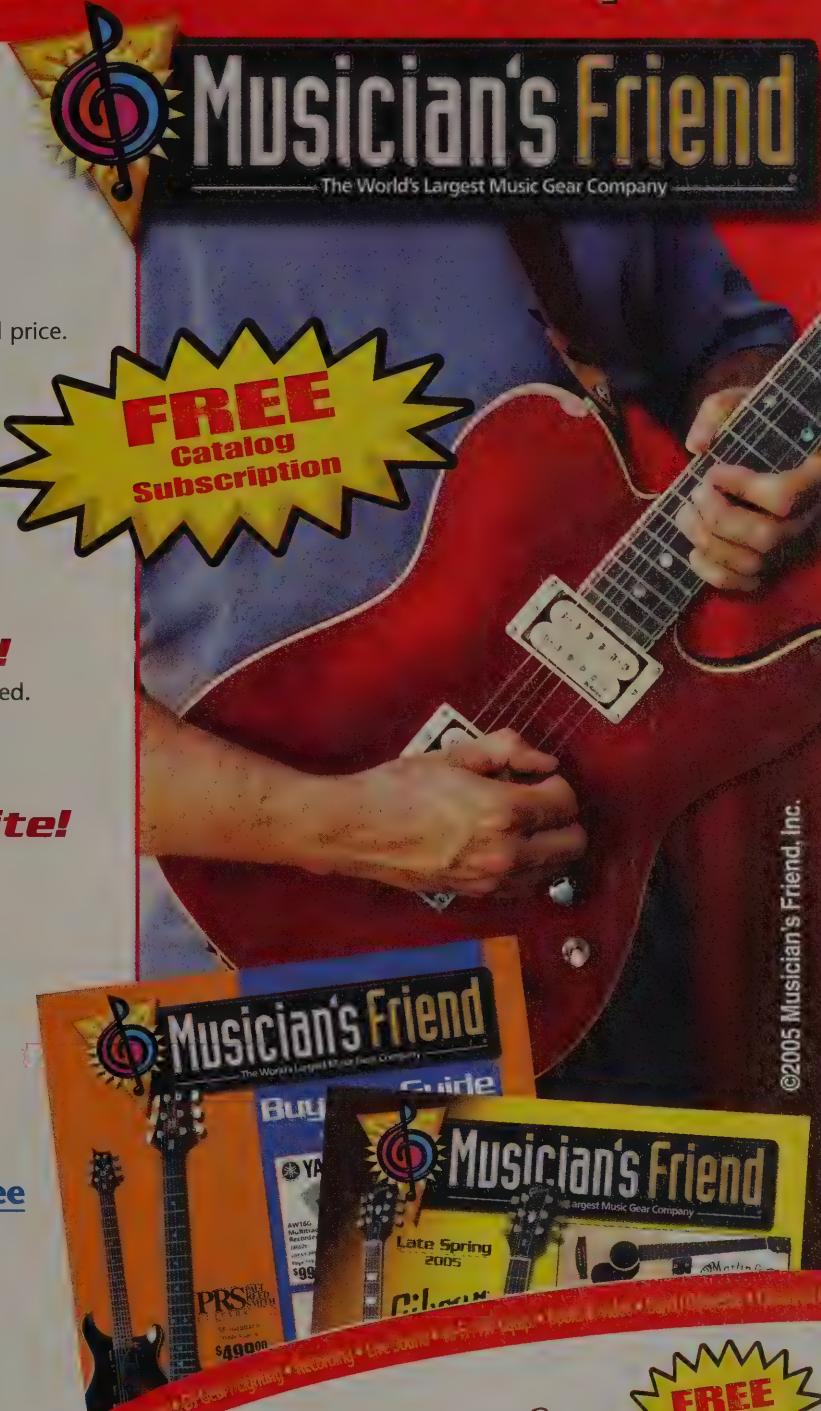
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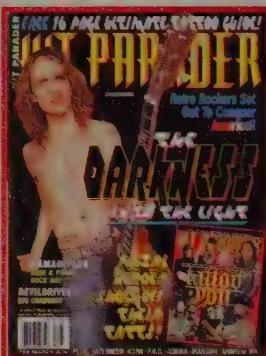


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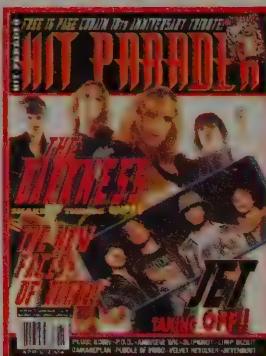
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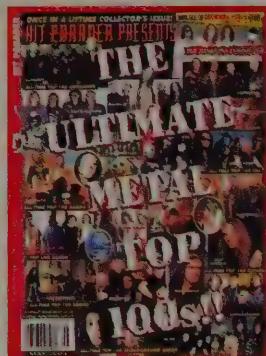
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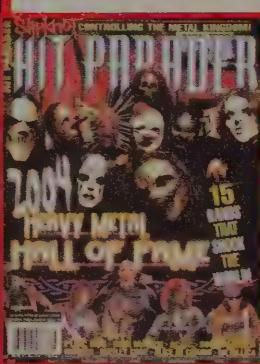
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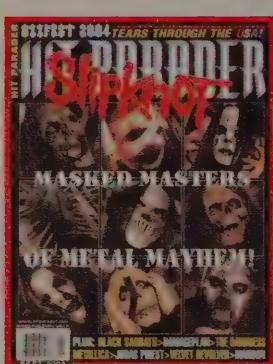
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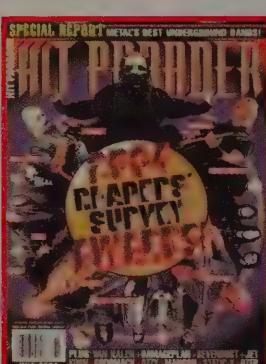
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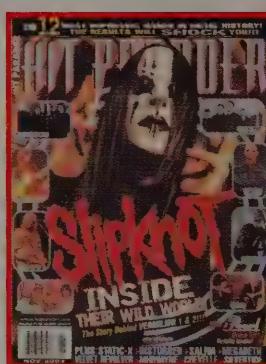
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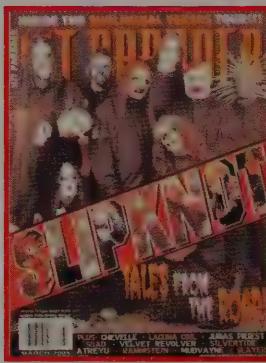
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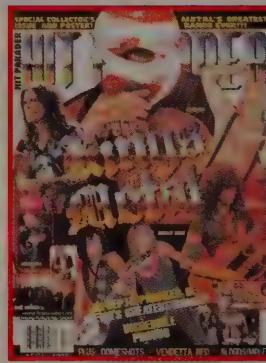
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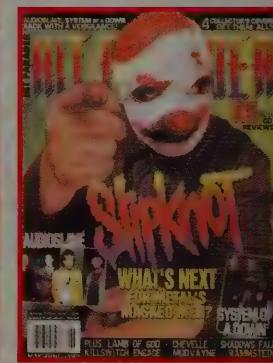
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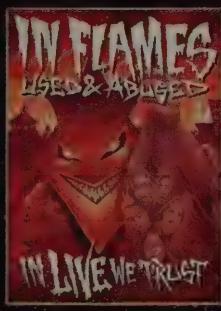
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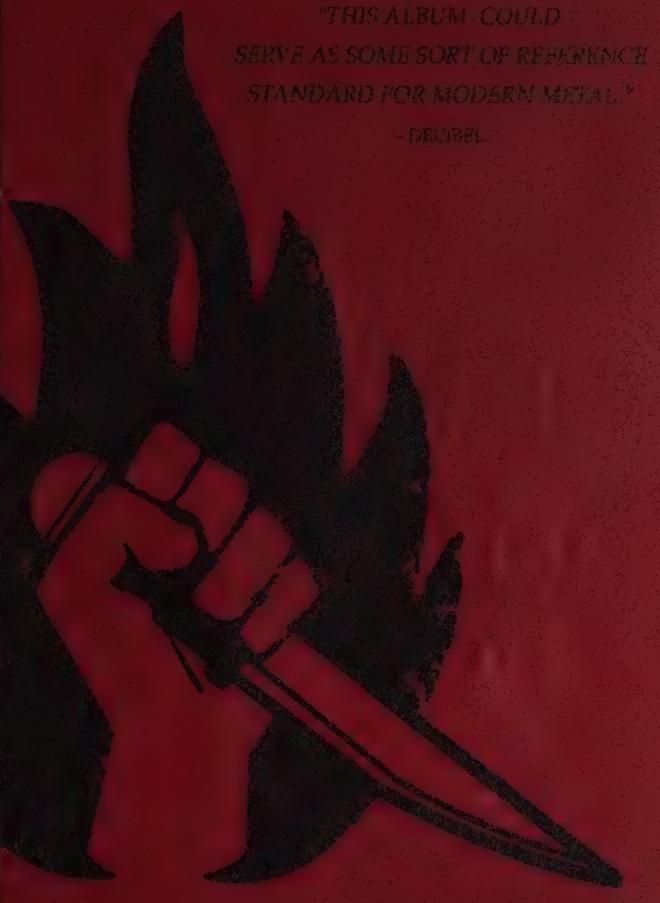
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TOYS IN THE ATTIC

THE COOLEST GAMES & GEAR

BY RENEE DAIGLE

1956 ELVIS—THE YEAR IN GOLD!

Thanks to legendary toy maker Todd McFarlane and Elvis Presley Enterprises (EPE), McFarlane Toys' latest Elvis action figure features the King of Rock 'n' Roll in his classic pose and gold lame outfit he wore during a New York City appearance in 1956.

The editors unanimously agree that McFarlane accurately captured the essence of Elvis in this impeccably detailed figure, which includes a custom marquee base and mic stand.

For more information about 1956 Elvis—The Year in Gold, please log onto McFarlane's web site at www.McFarlane.com.



McFARLANE'S SPORTS PICKS: NHL LEGENDS SERIES 2...

McFarlane Toys is back again with its second vintage series of classic hockey action figures appropriately titled **NHL Legends Series 2**.

The legendary players in this collection represent several eras of modern hockey. Each Hockey Hall of Famer (Montreal Canadiens Center, number 4, **Jean Beliveau**, 1950-1971; Boston Bruins Center, number 7, **Phil Esposito**, 1967-1976; Edmonton Oilers Goalie, number 31, **Grant Fuhr**, 1981-1991; Edmonton Oilers Center, number 99, **Wayne Gretzky**, 1978-1988; New York Islanders Right Wing, number 22, **Mike Bossy**, 1977-1987, and Los Angeles Kings Center, number 99, **Wayne Gretzky**, 1988-1996) is sculpted in an action pose with accurate period uniforms and equipment.

To collect all six, go to **McFarlane** on the web at www.McFarlane.com.

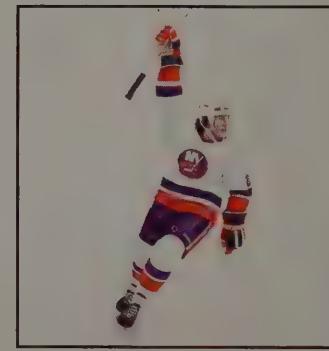
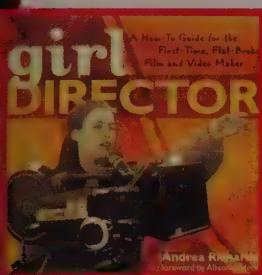


PHOTO COURTESY OF MCFARLANE TOYS

GIRL DIRECTOR

Girl Director—A How-To Guide for the First-Time Flat-Broke Film and Video Maker (Ten Speed Press) written by Andrea Richards. This book is a colorful



scrapbook of ideas, history, quotes, and know-how, that should inspire and fascinate the reader. Aside from learning the process of film production, *Girl Director* offers advice and insight from today's top directors, and much, much more!

Girl Director is a must-have handbook

for any aspiring auteur of any age. For more information about this book, please visit them on the web at www.tenspeed.com.

MUSIC INDUSTRY BOOK

Legal Aspects of the Music Industry (Billboard Books) written by Richard Schulenberg, he shows the musician, singers, composers, managers,

agents, attorneys—or anyone who is interested in the music industry speak the same language when it comes to "the business."

This informative book breaks down what a record company is and what each department does for the musician, as well as the necessary agreements, copyright information, and much more to help the reader survive the

proverbial rollercoaster ride, which we know as the "music industry!"

For more information about *Legal Aspects of the Music Industry*, please visit them on the web at www.wgpub.com.

TIMESPLITTERS

TimeSplitters Future Perfect by Electronic Arts challenges the gamer to team up with past, present and future versions of themselves, as they battle their way through an action-packed story spanning more than 500 years and loaded with this series' trademark humor.

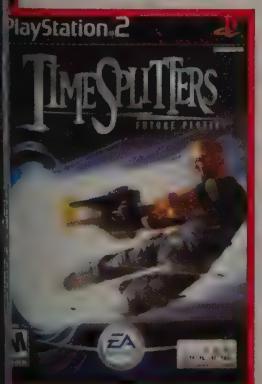
The game features a deep story mode taking the players from a 1921 Scottish castle to the frontlines of a robot war in 2541. Easy-to-use Mapmaker tools

allowing the gamer to create their own single and multiplayer levels and shares them online for endless replay value.

TimeSplitters offers the gamer more than 150 playable characters, from robotic super soldiers and Cold War commandos to zombie nurses and pistol-packing monkeys, as well as a 40 era-specific weapons and vehicles—from time disruption grenades and

giant machines to other assorted fighting machinery.

For more information about *TimeSplitters Future Perfect*, please visit them on the web at www.timesplitters.ea.com.



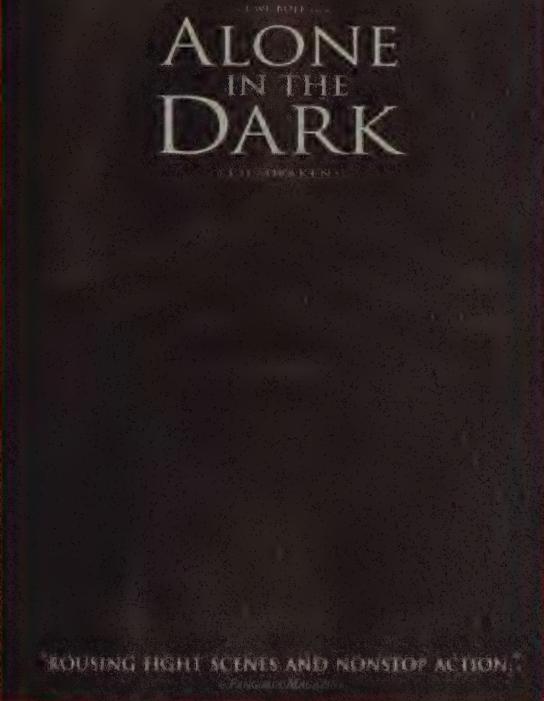
DVD REVIEWS

Alone in the Dark (Lions Gate Home Entertainment) is based on the best-selling Atari series. This movie takes viewers on a journey where evil spirits dwell and no one is safe!

Edward Carnby (Christian Slater, *Windtalkers* and *Broken Arrow*) is a private investigator specializing in unexplainable supernatural phenomena. His cases delve into the dark corners of the world, searching for truth in the occult remnants of ancient civilizations. Now, the great mystery of his past is about to become the most dangerous case he has ever faced.

With the help of his ex-girlfriend (Tara Reid, *American Pie 1 & 2* and *Urban Legend*), and his bitter rival, government agent Richard Burke (Stephen Dorff, *Cold Creek Manor* and *Blade*), Edward is about to learn that just because you don't believe in something doesn't mean it cannot kill you!

WIDESCREEN
CHRISTIAN SLATER TARA REID AND STEPHEN DORFF

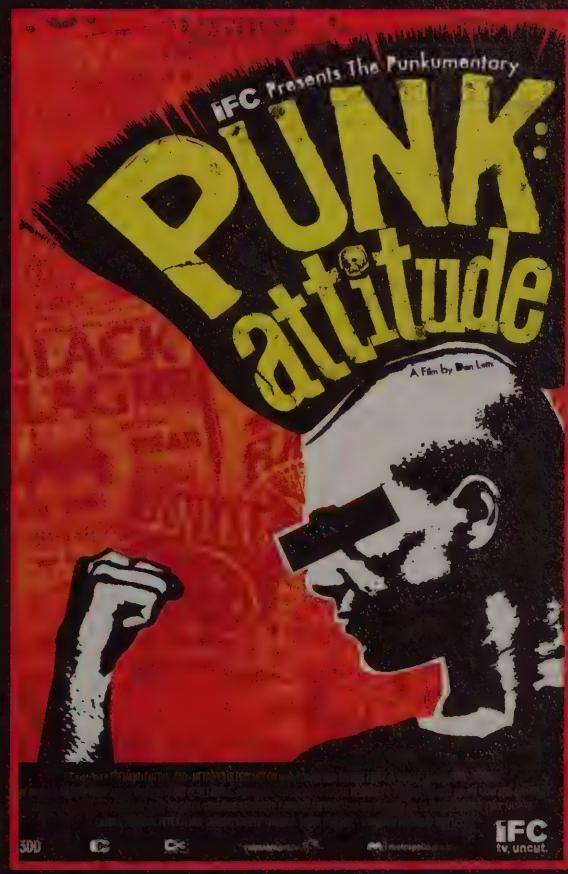


"ROUSING FIGHT SCENES AND NONSTOP ACTION!"

PUNK: ATTITUDE

"All you need is one guy or girl to stand up and say, F-this, and everyone goes: Voice of a generation—thank you! I've been thinking that, I never had the guts to say it—and all of a sudden—F-this has a backbeat," recalls Henry Rollins in the documentary *Punk: attitude* (3 DD Entertainment), which recently debuted at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City and now can be seen on the Independent Film Channel.

Punk: Attitude is a documentary film by filmmaker Don Letts. To name a few of the all-star casts: Chrissie Hynde (The Pretenders), David Johanson, (New York Dolls), Mick Jones (The Clash), Steve Jones (Sex Pistols), Glen Matlock (Sex Pistols), Tommy Ramone (The Ramones), Henry Rollins (Black Flag), John Sinclair (MC5), and Syl Sylvain (New York Dolls) share their stories about their passion for the movement, we call "punk rock!"



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TECH TALK WITH JOE PERRY

BY RYAN ABRAHAM

There can be no doubt about it, Joe Perry is one of those true-blue, bona-fide beyond-a-shadow-of-a-doubt rock and roll originals. For more than 30 years this Boston-born axe ace has ruled as the unmatched guitar maestro of Aerosmith, perhaps the most renowned and respected American hard rock band of all-time. During that period, that hallowed unit has sold over 100 million albums, won numerous Grammy Awards, been inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and achieved MTV Icon status. But, despite all that he's already accomplished in the rock and roll world, this is unquestionably the dawning of a new day for Mr. Perry. He's stepping out of the sizable shadow cast by bandmates Steven Tyler, Brad Whitford, Tom Hamilton and Joey Kramer in order to release his very first solo record... at least for those not counting his early-80s efforts with the Joe Perry Project.

No, don't worry, the appearance of **Joe Perry** doesn't mean that the guitarist is thinking of leaving the Aero fold (heaven forbid!) Nor does the album's release indicate any simmering problems with his long-time bandmates. What the disc's appearance does signal is that Perry's enjoying his "down time" from his regular gig, and making full use of his recently-completed Boneyard home studio—one in which Aerosmith's 2004 *Honkin' On Bobo* blues collection first came to life. Featuring 11 original hard rockin' tracks, along with covers of the Doors' *The Crystal Ship* and Woodie Guthrie's *Vigilante Man*, **Joe Perry** is one collection designed to appeal to Aerosmith fans... and beyond.

"It didn't occur to me to put this record out until Aerosmith decided to take a year off," Perry said. "It's as honest a record as you're gonna get. I did almost everything myself, which included all the guitar parts, the vocals, the bass and the keyboards. It gave me the chance to really try some things that have been knocking around in the back of my mind for a while and wanted to come out."

You might think that with Perry filling virtually all the vocal and instrumental roles on his new disc his hands would have been more-than-full. But if you thought that, you'd better think again! Indeed, Perry also produced the album, which was co-produced by Paul Caruso, who recorded and engineered the disc and also managed to play drums on every track. From the very start of the recording process, Perry knew that he wanted to keep things as simple as possible, avoiding the temptation to call in a variety of big-name guest stars to round out the studio proceedings.

"It seems like these days when people go off and do a solo record, it's more the norm to bring in a bunch of all-star friends," Perry said. "But I didn't want to do that. I already have the amazing fortune to play with one of the best singers in the world and the hardest rocking band on the planet. The way these songs developed from the demos, they already had the sound I was looking for. And it was a refreshing challenge to work this way."

While **Joe Perry** represents the guitarist's first true "solo" effort,

it also stands as his fourth disc away from Aerosmith. As most band historians well know, there was that period in the early '80s during which time Perry staked out on his own, creating the Joe Perry Project with whom he recorded three albums—*Let The Music Do The Talking* (1980), *I've Got The Rock 'N' Rolls Again* (1981) and *Once A Rocker Always A Rocker* (1984.) But don't for one second think that **Joe Perry** aims to recapture the sound or spirit of those earlier efforts; this is one album that clearly stands alone and apart.

"This one didn't come from anywhere near the same space as those albums," Perry said. "I mean, I had fun doing them and they certainly fulfilled a creative need, but this record reflects the experience of 20 more years of writing and recording and making my way on this planet."

So what exactly lies at the crux of this creative explosion? Apparently when Aerosmith completed their two-year long world tour (which encompassed the release of both their 2002 disc *Just Push Play* and 2004's *Bobo* blues set) it didn't take Perry long to grow a little bored with just sitting around the house. With his brand new home studio temptingly available just down stairs, Perry just couldn't resist the urge to wander down, plug in his guitar and start creating new music. He knew it wasn't time to begin writing for Aerosmith's next studio collection, so the structural framework for **Joe Perry** quickly began to take shape. Some of the songs on the album date back as much as ten years, while others were written on the spur of the studio moment, but together they give an expansive and extensive view into the musical world that is uniquely Perry's.

"One day I was home and complaining about a lack of inspiration and my wife, Billie, in her role as muse, said, 'Get down and sing where you belong,'" Perry said. "I felt I busted loose and started singing where my voice was more natural as you can hear on a lot

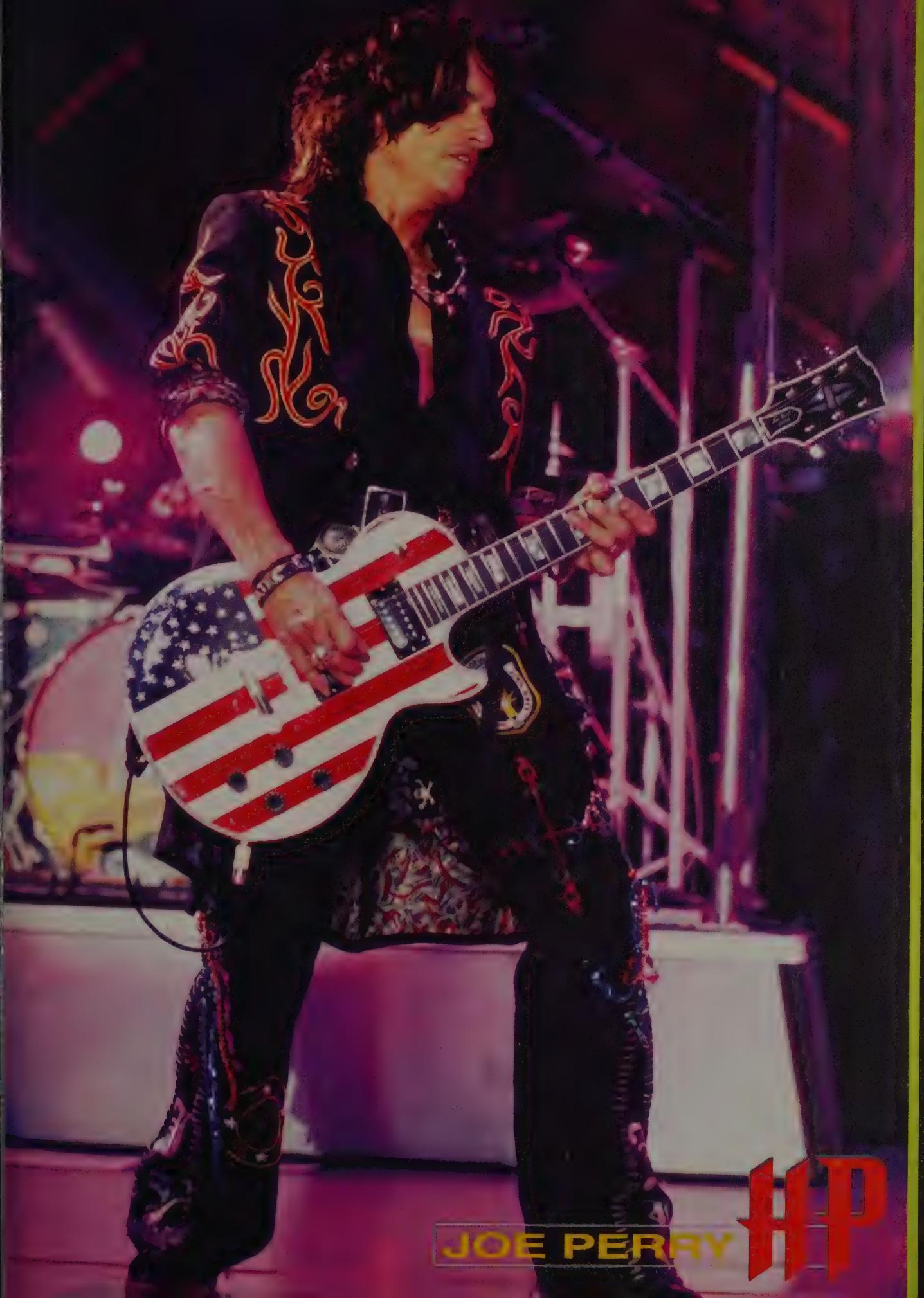
of these songs. I discovered a whole new place and it was a whole new vehicle for me. I found I was writing music better suited for my vocal range."

On such tracks as *Shakin' My Cage*, *Can't Compare and Hold On Me*, Perry proves that he's more than one of the most renowned guitarists of his era. He shows that he's an emotive vocalist and a gifted song writer, as well.

And while he waits for his brothers in Aerosmith to regain their rock and roll mojo and once again begin making music, Perry plans on keeping busy. There's talk of a solo tour where he'll not only play tracks from **Joe Perry** but bring some of his Project classics out of mothballs. All-in-all this is a man who has much to be proud of, and as long as he has a breath in his body, and strength enough is his hands to play guitar, it's quite apparent that Joe Perry will continue to crank out the rock and roll magic as only he can.

"I make music, that's what I do," he said. "When I have time on my hands, that's what I turn to. This album is an outpouring of a lot of the emotion I have inside of me. Most of the songs on this album are love songs. Some of them are fast and some of them are slow. That's about it. You sing what you know."

"It didn't occur to me to do a record until Aerosmith decided to take a year off."



JOE PERRY **HP**

INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

BY MICHAEL SHORE



GIBSON

To say that Gibson has long been one of THE great names in guitars is one of those things that should go without saying — yet you can't help repeating it every chance you get, as we have done many times in this space. So there, we've said it again — and we'll keep on doing it, because rather than rest on its hall-of-fame laurels, Gibson keeps on keeping on, too. Three new models show Gibson moving decisively into the future with both a bold high-tech move, and a couple of neo-classic models designed with some very well-known pros.

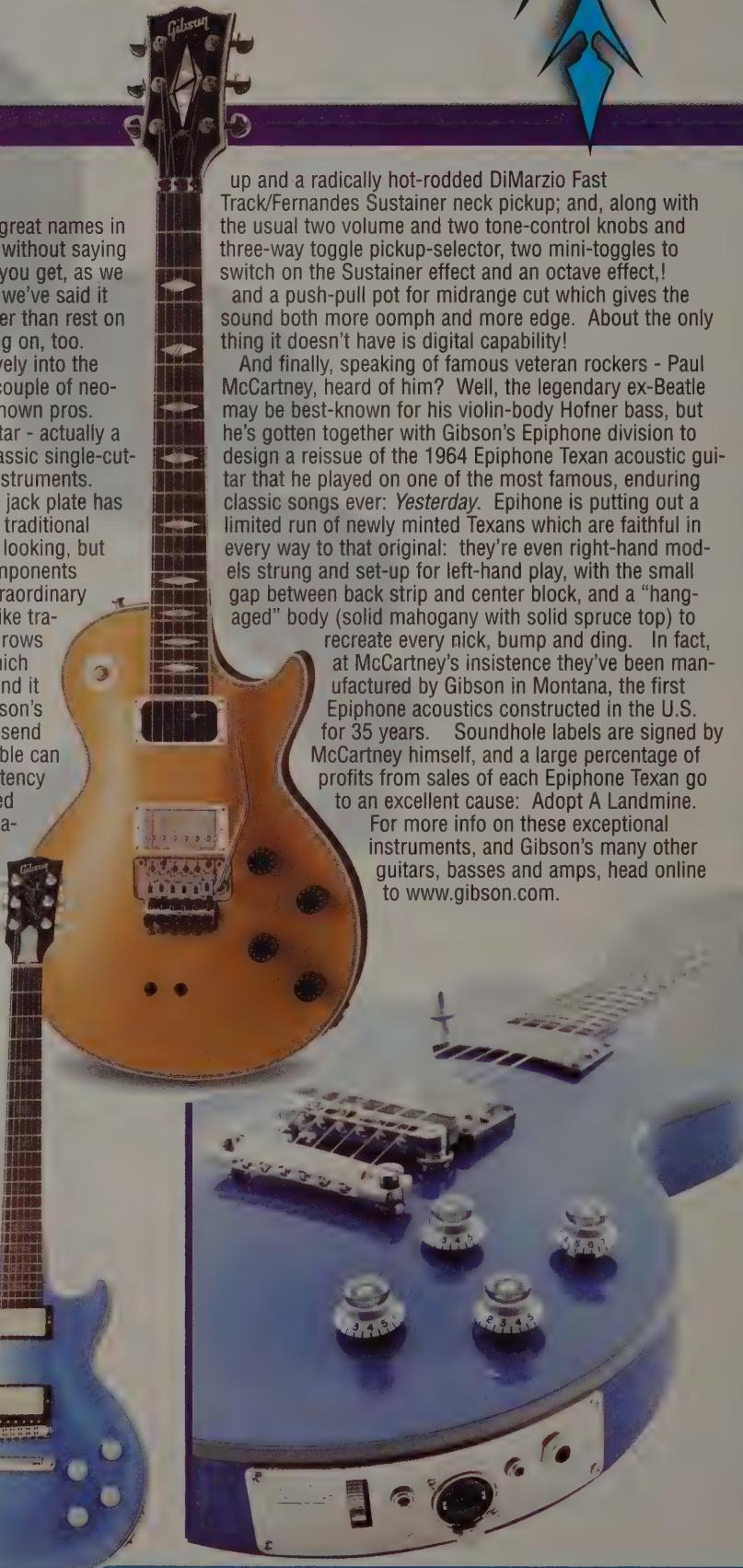
First up, the futuristic new Gibson Digital Guitar — actually a digital Les Paul, with the look and feel of the classic single-cutaway that's one of the all-time signature rock instruments. Eleven years in the making, the Gibson Digital's jack plate has a thin rectangular Ethernet port right next to its traditional quarter-inch plug...and you'd never guess from looking, but Gibson has managed to fit over 1,000 extra components behind that jack plate to handle this guitar's extraordinary capabilities. The two pickups may look kind'a like traditional Gibson humbuckers, with their double rows of pole-pieces...but these are "hex" pickups, which capture a separate signal for each string and send it to an onboard digital converter, which uses Gibson's patented MaGIC digital transport technology to send out the signal via Cat-5 Ethernet cable. That cable can carry the signal for up to 100 meters with no latency or signal-loss issues, and it plugs into a supplied "Breakout Box" to convert the signal back to analog, outputting it in Sum, Stereo or Hex configurations. The tonal and panning possibilities are no less than mind-blowing, and could take you a while to figure out...it's easy to see why Gibson calls this "the biggest advance in electric guitar design in over 70 years." But the beauty part is, this IS in all other respects a Gibson Les Paul — and as such you could ignore the digital aspects and still have one HELL of a "traditional" analog guitar!

And speaking of more traditional Les Pauls...Gibson has huddled with Neal Schon, the rock veteran best known for his work with Journey (before that he was in Santana — yeah, if Carlos Santana picks you to be in his band I'd guess you can play!), to develop a new Neal Schon Signature Les Paul. Personal touches on this beauty include: Floyd Rose tremolo bridge; a dramatically sculpted "Schon custom" scarfed-heel joint where the slim-taper one-piece mahogany neck meets the body (which oh by the way, has carved mahogany top, mahogany back and multi-ply white/black binding on top) for easier upper-fret access; pearl split-diamond inlays on the 22-fret ebony fingerboard; chrome-plated hardware; Gibson BurstBucker Pro neck pick-

up and a radically hot-rodded DiMarzio Fast Track/Fernandes Sustainer neck pickup; and, along with the usual two volume and two tone-control knobs and three-way toggle pickup-selector, two mini-toggles to switch on the Sustainer effect and an octave effect, and a push-pull pot for midrange cut which gives the sound both more oomph and more edge. About the only thing it doesn't have is digital capability!

And finally, speaking of famous veteran rockers — Paul McCartney, heard of him? Well, the legendary ex-Beatle may be best-known for his violin-body Hofner bass, but he's gotten together with Gibson's Epiphone division to design a reissue of the 1964 Epiphone Texan acoustic guitar that he played on one of the most famous, enduring classic songs ever: *Yesterday*. Epiphone is putting out a limited run of newly minted Texans which are faithful in every way to that original: they're even right-hand models strung and set-up for left-hand play, with the small gap between back strip and center block, and a "hangaged" body (solid mahogany with solid spruce top) to recreate every nick, bump and ding. In fact, at McCartney's insistence they've been manufactured by Gibson in Montana, the first Epiphone acoustics constructed in the U.S. for 35 years. Soundhole labels are signed by McCartney himself, and a large percentage of profits from sales of each Epiphone Texan go to an excellent cause: Adopt A Landmine.

For more info on these exceptional instruments, and Gibson's many other guitars, basses and amps, head online to www.gibson.com.





HIWATT ECHO THEREMIN

Hiwatt, a legendary name in amplifiers, still makes great amps which we'll be covering here. But they've also got a very cool new update on one of the coolest and craziest instruments of all time: the Theremin, invented in 1920 by the Russian scientist whose name it bears, and considered one of the world's first synthesizers. You've heard its eerie wail on the soundtracks of science-fiction films, in the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations," and played by Jimmy Page in Led Zeppelin's "Dazed and Confused" among others. What's so cool and crazy about the theremin is, it's the only musical instrument anyone knows of that's played without touching it! It works by generating a static electricity field, into which you move your hands; the traditional theremin used a vertical antenna on its top and a loop-shaped antenna on its side to control tone and volume. With no keyboard, no anything to actually touch and control, the theremin is fun for a while but, finally, extremely difficult to play well (but check out the records by violinist and Theremin virtuoso Clara Rockmore, who played classical pieces on it!) as you are literally trying to locate notes in mid-air!

Hiwatt's new Echo Theremin uses a metallic dome that's a lot easier to get work with than the two antennas...and, it takes things one step beyond with built-in delay of up to 300 milliseconds. For more info visit www.hiwatt.com online.



BEYERDYNAMIC MIC

beyerdynamic's new M88TG is a sturdy, clear-sounding all-purpose dynamic microphone that's impressive for vocals, or for other acoustic instruments like brass or woodwinds...but what we really like about it is, its high-SPL (Sound Pressure Level) makes it ideal for high-pressure sonic environments, such as being placed very close to very loud sound-sources like a bass drum, or a bass amp. Special features include a reinforced basket to withstand rough handling, integral -20 dB humbucking filter, and a hypercardioid polar pickup pattern with frequency response of 30-20,000 Hz. For more info on this and beyerdynamic's many other mics, check out www.beyerdynamic-usa.com online.



ELECTRO-VOICE RE410 CONDENSER MIC

Electro-Voice's new RE410 condenser is the latest addition to its high-performance RE Series of microphones. Idea for picking voices out of a crowded mix, this hand-held is perfect for high-energy rock, with a crisp, clear high-end, a sweet midrange, and a cardioid pattern for great acoustic isolation and feedback-rejection. It's got a multistage pop filter to handle breath and pop noises, high-compliance shock mount to effectively eliminate handling noises, and a comfortable Warm-Grip handle. For more on this and EV's many other mics, visit www.electrovoice.com online.

INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

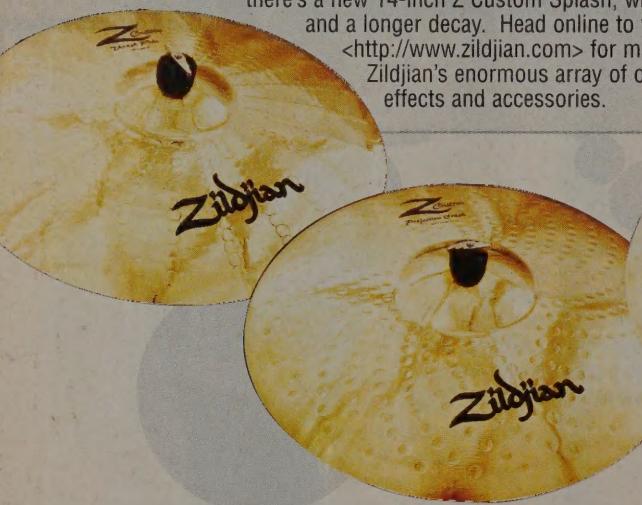
BEAT

DRUM

ZILDJIAN

Zildjian, the world's oldest and most respected cymbal-maker, has some very cool new additions to its Z Custom line - which, being loud, raw and aggressive, ought to be right up your alley. The new Z Custom Thrash Ride is a medium-heavy 19 inch model with a hybrid of A Custom and Z Custom hammering, to bring a whole new meaning to the familiar old term "crash-ride." Yes you can crash it - but when you "ride" it on its shoulder, what you get is not so much a traditional ride-style "ping" with attendant "wash" of overtones spreading out beneath and around it. Instead, you get a wash like a great big tidal wave: a continuous, controlled but powerful crashing, loud enough to cut through anything and a truly unique innovation that anyone playing in a high-volume setting has to check out. The new 20-inch Z Custom Projection Crash has a unique profile with the largest bell of any Zildjian crash, and holds the remarkable distinction of being the loudest cymbal Zildjian says it's ever created. THAT is saying something. Finally, to keep up with these new super-loud crashes and rides, there's a new 14-inch Z Custom Splash, with genuine cutting power and a longer decay. Head online to www.zildjian.com

<<http://www.zildjian.com>> for more on these and Zildjian's enormous array of other cymbals, gongs, effects and accessories.



PHOTOS ON DISC

PEARL

Finally, if like Tom Cruise in *Top Gun*, you have "the need for speed" - in your bass drum pedal - you may want to check out Pearl's new PowerShifter pedals, the P1000 Pro Stock, or the P120P. The Pro Stock (\$199 list) combines lightning response with brute power, thanks to a highly responsive round cam; in a really nice thoughtful touch, it accepts a chain or belt, which are both included, along with a Pearl QuadBeater, footboard angle-adjustment, and UltraGrip clamp bolt. The P120P (\$89 list), standard on Pearl's excellent Export kits, has a heavier DuoBeat beater, single-chain linkage to its super-responsive round cam, and styling inspired by Pearl's top-of-the-line Eliminator pedals. To learn more about both, as well as Pearl's wide variety of drums, kits and hardware, visit www.pearl.com online.



PROMARK

To keep cymbals clean, if you're on more of a budget, ProMark - the drumstick, mallet, and percussion accessory giant - has come out with Groove Juice Jr., a new cleaner specially formulated for use on entry-level cymbals. Like ProMark's popular, original Groove Juice, the new Groove Juice Junior is easily spray-applied, wipes off with a cloth, and does a terrific job of cleaning without discoloring metal or harming a cymbal's finish. Groove Juice Junior lists for \$9.95 per bottle. Find out more on this and ProMark's many sticks, mallets, and other accessories, at www.promark.com online.



Chad Szeliga

& Yamaha Drums

Chad's Absolute Maple
Nouveau Kit

Chad's Drum Tech,
Jay Ballinger

Chad's DTX
Electronic Pad

Chad's
Steve Jordan
Signature Snare

Chad's
Flying Dragon
Double Pedal

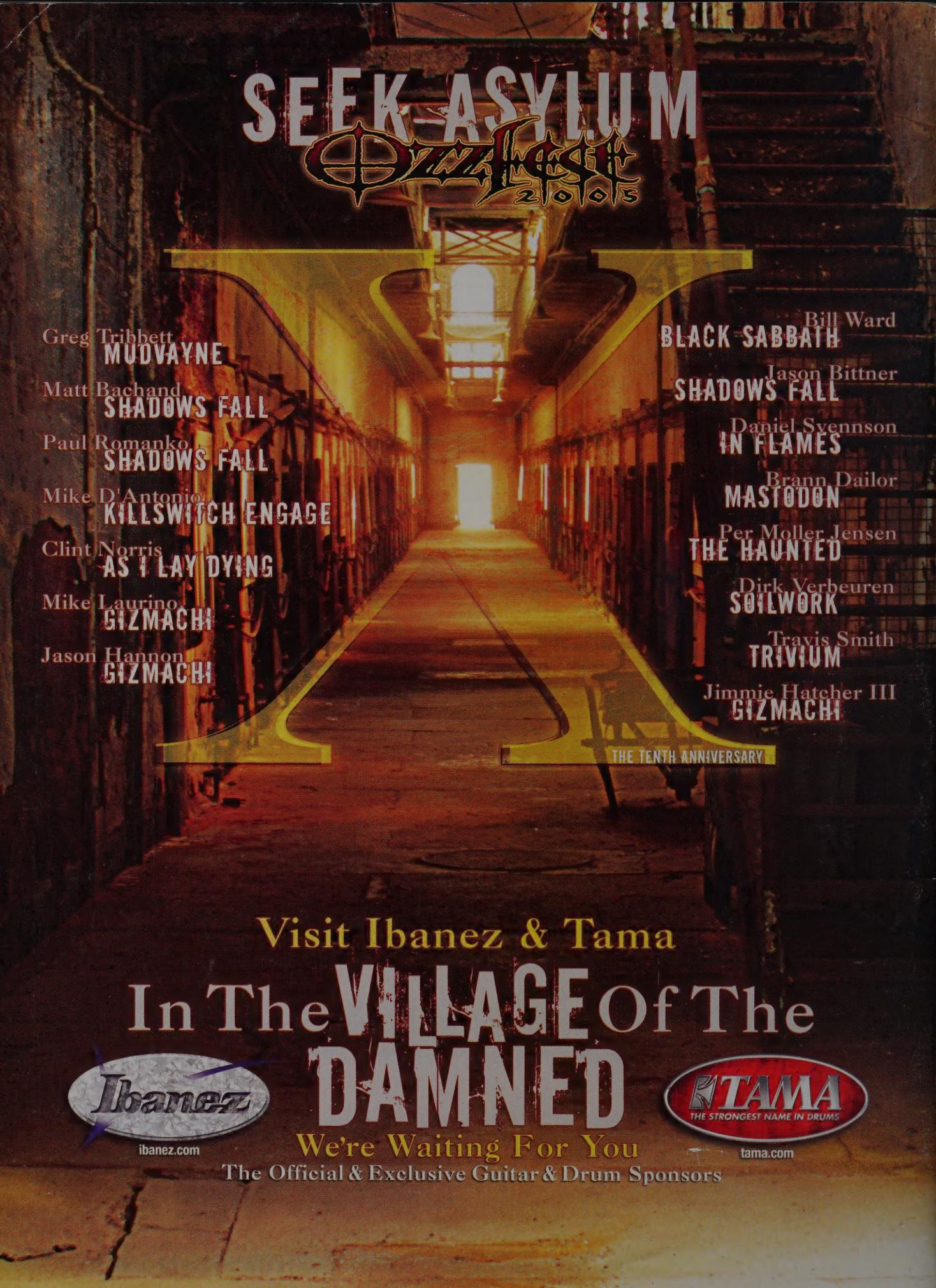
Chad's Musashi
Oak Snare Drum

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SEEK-ASYLUM



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